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# Post-Revolutionary Cuba in a Changing World

Edward Gonzalez and David Ronfeldt

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A Report prepared for  
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF  
DEFENSE/INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS



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PREFACE

This case study of Fidel Castro's Cuba was prepared as a contribution to a general understanding of the ways in which rapidly changing trends in the international environment may be having a significant impact on the foreign policy perspectives of Third World nation-states--perspectives that have affected U.S. security interests in the recent past. Although the study may attract readers whose primary interest is post-revolutionary Cuban political history as a separate research subject, the objective of the study was to probe concerns that are much broader than Cuba alone. The research was sponsored by the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy Planning and NSC Affairs, International Security Affairs, Department of Defense, as an element of a still broader research program on U.S. long-term competition with the Soviet Union. This report builds on prior Rand work on Cuba that focused on the divisions within the Cuban leadership and their implications for foreign policy.

The final draft of this report was completed in September 1975, before the first signs of Cuba's massive military involvement in Angola, and prior to the First Party Congress in December 1975. While the report only touches on the potential use of the Cuban armed forces in extra-hemispheric roles, we believe that the Angola involvement provides a substantial confirmation of fundamental elements of our analysis about future Cuban roles in a world that is moving out of the Cold War into a new era of hot détente. The report forecasts that the Cuban government and its armed forces would probably render conventional military assistance to an allied Latin American government in the event of a conventional regional conflict, especially if détente between the United States and the Soviet Union continues to serve as an umbrella for the island's security from U.S. intervention. It further points out that while Havana's foreign policy has increasingly conformed to Soviet objectives, it has also sought to enhance Cuba's own Third World standing. Indeed, the new period of East-West détente and competition has inclined the Cubans to acquire new leverage through a militant

strategy of South-North confrontation by the "Third World" against U.S. "imperialism." Finally, the report stresses the increasing influence of the Cuban military as an elite sector in party-government decisionmaking bodies, now evidenced by the dispatch of combat troops to Angola, and by the naming of senior military officers from the Chiefs of Staff to membership and alternate membership posts in the new Party Central Committee in December.

The outcome to the Party Congress further confirms the internal political trends predicted in this report. While the "old Communists" from the ranks of the Moscow-oriented Popular Socialist Party gained new seats in the Political Bureau and Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, these gains were diluted by the additions of new *fidelistas* and *raulistas* to both these bodies. Fidel and Raúl were reappointed as First and Second Secretary, respectively. The Castro brothers have thus reaffirmed their dominance of the Party, in addition to preserving their control over the armed forces, security apparatus, and principal organs of government.

SUMMARY

The year 1970 was a watershed for the Cuban Revolution: Fidel Castro not only failed in his attempt to attain the scheduled 10-million-ton sugar harvest for that year, but also created economic chaos in the process. As a result of the harvest shortfall and economic dislocation, Castro's personal authority was weakened and the way was cleared for a more institutionalized political order. Since then, the "institutionalization of the Revolution" has proceeded rapidly. It has entailed the depersonalization of the political process, the drafting of Cuba's new socialist constitution, and the convening of the First Party Congress. This strengthening of government administration and of the Cuban Communist Party has led to a Soviet-style bureaucratic order and to new constraints on Fidel Castro's decision-making authority. In the process, Soviet influence over Cuba's domestic policies and Cuban conformity with Moscow's foreign policies have both increased.

Although the process of institutionalization initially circumscribed Castro's authority, it has recently strengthened his personal power base. While still relying on the military and his coterie of *fidelistas*, Fidel has also expanded the ruling coalition of effective policymakers to include such increasingly prominent figures as Deputy Prime Minister Carlos Rafael Rodríguez and President Oswaldo Dorticós, as well as his brother Raúl Castro. By thus reconstituting the coalition, Fidel has retained the allegiance of the new technocratic and administrative elites in his regime. In the meantime, a more orderly process of decisionmaking and administration has helped to spur Cuba's economic recovery to the political advantage of the Cuban leader. Castro thus remains in full command and control of the institutionalization process. In turn, the renewed stability of Castro's domestic position now allows him greater flexibility and personal leverage in the shaping of Cuba's foreign policy, more than at any time since the mid-to late 1960s, when he was pursuing a highly independent foreign policy posture. Working in tandem with Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, he can afford

to be innovative in foreign policy matters, even in his dealings with the United States.

A new sense that the Revolution is successful and secure pervades elite perspectives. In brief, Cuba is "winning." The Cuban economy is developing quite well, assisted by recent Soviet commitments to provide trade and technology and to postpone Cuban debt repayments. The United States no longer represents a military threat: instead, imperialism is seen as moving backwards and the "Yankee Empire" as falling apart. And the rise of progressive, nationalist governments in Latin America and the Third World is seen as highly advantageous to Cuban interests.

At the same time, Cuban leaders recognize that their island is increasingly vulnerable to and dependent upon new global economic forces over which the elites have little or no control, and from which they were previously insulated by the Soviet bloc. In order to assure continued economic growth, Cuba will require the importation of advanced or so-called "vanguard" technology and training, much of which cannot be met by the socialist bloc or by friendly Latin American countries.

The Cuban leaders have recognized the dependence of their economic progress on a broad range of new economic ties with the advanced capitalist countries. As a result, although the impact of the international energy and monetary crises on the capitalist system could be seen to represent some fulfillment of Marxist prophecy, they do not rejoice. Rather, they are troubled by rising import costs, and fear that a collapse of the capitalist system might spread ruination among the Third World.

Cuban leaders, while continuing to move aggressively on some fronts, seem increasingly inclined to adopt relatively prudent foreign policy postures that are essentially protective and low risk in nature. Their primary objectives now seem to include the following:

- (a) Formation of new alliances in the Caribbean, Latin America, and the Third World,
- (b) Acquisition of "vanguard technology" and training from Western sources,



- (c) Reduction of Cuba's client-state relationship with the Soviet Union.

The Cubans will continue to view their country as a mutual broker between Latin America and the socialist camp. Nonetheless, they will likely emphasize their identity as a Third World member at times, more than as a constituent of the Soviet socialist system. They may show generally greater concern for North-South struggles than for East-West competition.

Six strategic elements will probably dominate Cuban foreign policy. Toward the Soviet Union, the Cuban posture will emphasize

- (1) Participation in détente, but this may mask
- (2) A deeper Cuban interest in reducing economic dependence and asserting greater political independence without forgoing military protection and otherwise good relations with Moscow.

Toward the United States, the evolving strategies will emphasize

- (3) Cautious negotiations for advanced technology and trade, and
- (4) Selective nonviolent "confrontations with imperialism" through Latin American/Third World unity in order to wrest major concessions from the United States.

Toward Latin America, the old strategy of aid to revolution has given way to a new strategy of

- (5) Unity and alliance with progressive, nationalist governments, possibly extending in the future to Cuban provision of
- (6) Conventional military assistance to an ally in the event of military conflict within the region.

Intrinsically, these six strategic elements do not combine to produce a coherently integrated foreign policy. In addition, these

inconsistencies are likely to be intensified by the competing interests of the various policymaking elites, and by the differences in organizational mission of Cuba's administrative, military, and Party bureaucracies. As a result, Cuba's foreign behavior may often appear ambivalent, and at times may lack synchronization.

Cuba elites believe that Cuba will continue to have high status and influence in the Latin American region. The process of détente and normalization, however, could lead to a decline in Cuba's saliency as an actor and issue. The small island nation might return to a middle-ranking position in the inter-American community, where Cuban activities are of greater significance to the neighboring United States and the Caribbean than to the traditionally high-ranking, large countries of South America. At the same time, recent Cuban efforts to develop broader ties with Caribbean area governments, as well as renewed support for the Puerto Rican independence movement, indicate that Havana aims to expand its roles and influence on a subregional scale.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Time and again for more than a decade, Cuba has held the center of international attention. We saw this with the Cuban solicitation of Soviet economic and military assistance, the Bay of Pigs invasion, and the October 1962 missile crisis. Since then, Cuba has continued to occupy center stage in the Alliance for Progress programs, the regime's extension of revolutionary aid to guerrilla struggles, the increasing use of the island for Soviet naval operations in the Caribbean in the early 1970s, and in the discussion of the "Cuban issue" at recent OAS meetings. But is Cuba still of international importance? Fidel Castro and his fellow leaders certainly believe that it is: for them, Cuba remains a heroic and leading force in international affairs, a socialist model for other developing countries, an intermediary between the Soviet bloc and the Third World, and a fulcrum for moving the United States and Latin America in new directions. Cuba's role in the future, they seem to believe, will be as significant as in the past.

The bases for their beliefs in Cuba's importance have changed, however. The old avowals of external threat and internal experiment no longer invigorate their policy postures: the prospect of attack has diminished; the experiment is becoming institutionalized. Of necessity, moreover, Cuba's foreign policy has had to move into a post-revolutionary phase. After more than a decade of near isolation, Cuba under Castro is actively reaching for new relations, or normalization, with Latin American countries and the United States. At the same time, the Castro regime is seeking to retain its protective ties to the Soviet Union within the framework of détente. Indeed, the very terms "normalization" and "détente," unheard more than a few years ago, symbolize the profound changes that are affecting the context and content of Cuba's foreign policy as it qualifies former plans for long-term integration into the Soviet socialist bloc, and relinquishes the defiance and hostility that were formerly aimed at American neighbors.

In this report, we analyze current and prospective changes in Cuban perspectives toward the Soviet Union, the United States, and Latin

America. Our main sources are the Cuban press, periodicals, radio broadcasts, and official Party and government pronouncements. We have relied heavily on the public speeches and interviews of government leaders, especially Prime Minister Fidel Castro, Deputy Prime Minister Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, President Osvaldo Dorticós, and Defense Minister Raúl Castro. From these materials, we analyze (1) the domestic context in which Cuban foreign policy is made; (2) the Cuban leaders' own images of their country and the world in the mid-1970s; and (3) the foreign policy objectives and strategies that the Cuban leaders are likely to emphasize toward the Soviet Union, the United States, and Latin America during the remainder of the 1970s.

The section following this introduction focuses on the domestic context. It provides an assessment in depth of the elites and the institutions that are likely to dominate the Cuban government during the near future, and therefore to guide the island's expanding relations abroad. The Soviet presence within Cuba is treated as an important element of the domestic context.

The next section studies the dominant perspectives regarding changes in Cuba's international context, and the importance of Cuba's place in relation to the Soviet Union, the United States, and Latin America. The evolving Cuban perceptions are quite ambivalent in many respects. There are dichotomies in Cuban perceptions whereby developments have instilled either (a) a new sense that the Revolution is successful and secure, or (b) a new concern that the island is increasingly vulnerable to and dependent upon external developments over which the Cuban regime has little or no control.

In the final section we briefly identify the major foreign policy objectives and the general posture that Cuban leaders seem likely to prefer during the remainder of this decade. Using empirical details, we dissect Cuban perspectives into six different strategies that Cuban leaders indicate they will use to deal with the Soviet Union, the United States, and Latin America. Our analysis points out various difficulties that the Cubans may encounter in deciding how to mix these diverse strategic elements and still impress the world with their Revolution and their island.



## II. THE DOMESTIC CONTEXT OF CUBA'S NEW FOREIGN POLICY

The year 1970 was a watershed for the Cuban Revolution. That year, Fidel Castro failed in his heralded attempt to attain a 10-million-ton sugar harvest. He created economic chaos in the process. And as a consequence of these setbacks, he finally succumbed to pressures for a more ordered and less personalistic government, as signalled by his speech of July 26, 1970. Thus, the Castro regime entered a new stage known as the "institutionalization of the Revolution." As part of this new stage, Soviet influence expanded across Cuba's internal and foreign affairs to an extent far greater than in the 1960s.

This section examines Cuba's internal and external developments in the 1970 to 1975 period in order to provide the essential context for the subsequent analysis of Cuba's new foreign policy postures. Three major points stand out in this connection. First, the "institutionalization of the Revolution" has brought the depersonalization of governance, and the strengthening of government and party organs along the lines of the Soviet organizational model. Second, Moscow has strengthened both its commitments to and control over Havana, while the latter's domestic and foreign policies have presently conformed to Soviet orthodoxy. Finally, contrary to expectations, the very process of institutionalization has strengthened Fidel Castro's political power at home, enabling him now to be more flexible and even accommodative in his foreign policy postures.

### THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE REVOLUTION

Throughout the entire 1959-70 period, the Cuban revolutionary process was dominated by the personality of Fidel Castro. As Cuba's "socialist *caudillo*," his personal authority in decisionmaking was unencumbered by institutional constraints and unchallenged by his subordinates. Castro's centrality stemmed in large measure from the charismatic authority granted by his ardent *fidelista* followers within the regime, as well as by society at large. Such authority was rooted in the belief that he was an extraordinary leader who could perform

"miracles," as he had demonstrated in toppling Batista, in redistributing wealth among the lower classes, in successfully defying the United States at the Bay of Pigs, and in obtaining Soviet economic and military assistance while retaining a measure of independence from Moscow.<sup>1</sup>

By the late 1960s, however, the *fidelista* political order reached an impasse, and most of its major objectives remained either unfulfilled or seriously compromised. Che Guevara's failure in Bolivia in October 1967, for example, soon led Havana to retreat from its espousal of armed revolution in Latin America. A faltering economy and Soviet economic denials forced Castro to abandon his independent foreign policy line and to support Moscow, as signalled by his endorsement of the Warsaw Pact occupation of Czechoslovakia in August 1968. Success eluded the *fidelista* regime on the domestic front as well, where production objectives, especially in the critical sugar industry, were seldom attained despite large-scale investments and mass mobilization campaigns. Meanwhile, the austerity of constant "revolutionary sacrifices" that Castro demanded of the people produced popular discontent and demoralization, shown by a rising rate of absenteeism among the labor force. Clearly the regime needed a major breakthrough at home or abroad. Castro's charismatic authority in particular could gain renewed luster only by means of a stupendous personal triumph.

#### The Turning Point in 1970

Beginning in the late 1960s, therefore, the attainment of the 10-million-ton sugar harvest scheduled for 1970 became an all-consuming goal for the Castro regime. Such a record harvest, which would better the previous mark of 7.2 million set in 1952, was seen as a way of reviving flagging public morale, regaining a greater measure of economic independence from the Soviets, and demonstrating the economic efficacy of the *fidelista* order and Castro's personal style of leadership. Thus,

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<sup>1</sup>On these and other aspects of the Castro regime, see Edward Gonzalez, *Cuba Under Castro: The Limits of Charisma*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1974, pp. 113-189.

the *líder máximo* placed his own reputation publicly on the line. Insisting that the harvest was feasible, he concentrated all available capital, transport facilities, and manpower in the sugar sector, and mobilized upwards of 70,000 members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR). Although a new record was set, the harvest fell short of the target figure by nearly 1.5-million tons. More critically, excessive concentration on the harvest led to major production setbacks and massive bottlenecks in other sectors of the economy. Consequently, on the anniversary celebration of July 26, 1970, it was a chastened *líder máximo* who publicly confessed to his personal responsibility in contributing to the country's economic paralysis, who acknowledged his "ignorance" and inability to perform "miracles," and who conceded the need for major administrative reforms in order to spur the island's economic recovery.

The harvest shortfall and economic disorder of 1970, together with Castro's July 26th speech, cleared the way for the institutionalization of the Revolution. This entailed the creation of institutional constraints on Castro's decisionmaking powers, the development of regularized procedures for policy formulation and policy implementation, and, above all, the transfer of political authority from the individual leader to the party and government. In brief, institutionalization in the Cuban context was considered necessary so that the various organs of the Castro regime might govern effectively not only in the absence of the *líder máximo*, but also in his presence.<sup>2</sup>

No less a leading figure than Raúl Castro has acknowledged that "The institutionalization of our Revolution began in 1970 and was accelerated from 1972 onwards...."<sup>3</sup> In this regard, Fidel Castro himself underscored the transfer of political legitimacy and authority to the Communist Party of Cuba in his speech of July 26, 1973:

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<sup>2</sup>On developments leading to the breakdown of Castro's charismatic authority, see *ibid.*, pp. 190-225.

<sup>3</sup>*Granma* (Weekly Review), September 8, 1974, p. 3. Unless otherwise indicated, all references to *Granma* will be to the Weekly Review edition.

...In the uncertain times of the 26th of July and in the early years of the Revolution, individuals played a decisive role, a role now carried out by the Party. Men die, but the Party is immortal [emphasis added].<sup>4</sup>

More recently, Deputy Prime Minister Carlos Rafael Rodríguez also asserted in an interview in *Le Monde* that "the state will be completely institutionalized" by 1976.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the evidence is unmistakable that institutionalization has proceeded with remarkable rapidity since 1970. Specifically, it has moved forward on three consecutive fronts, involving (1) the depersonalization of governance, (2) the reorganization and strengthening of both the government and party, and (3) the drawing-up of Cuba's first socialist constitution and the convening of the First Party Congress.<sup>6</sup> These measures are discussed below.

#### The Depersonalization of Governance

The depersonalization of governance began in the summer of 1970 with the replacement of several of Castro's close associates or other docile subordinates by more qualified personnel drawn from civilian and especially military officer ranks.<sup>7</sup> In fact, the FAR has supplied no less than nine senior or high-ranking army commanders for governmental

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<sup>4</sup> *Granma*, August 5, 1973, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> *Le Monde*, January 16, 1975, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> For a more detailed analysis of policy changes as well as the institutionalization process, see Gonzalez, op. cit., pp. 225-236; Carmelo Mesa-Lago, *Cuba in the 1970s--Pragmatism and Institutionalization*, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1974; and Leon Gouré and Morris Rothenberg, *Soviet Penetration of Latin America*, Center for Advanced International Studies, Monographs in International Affairs, University of Miami, Miami, Florida, 1975, pp. 19-80.

<sup>7</sup> Thus, José Llanusa, one of Fidel's cronies, was replaced in July 1970 as Minister of Education. Armando Hart, one of Fidel's closest associates and the husband of Haydee Santamaría, whose association with Fidel dates back to her participation in the Moncada attack, evidently ceased to hold his key Party post as Organizational Secretary as indicated by the failure of the Cuban press to refer to him in this capacity after September 1970. Another *fidelista*, Major Guillermo García, was reportedly under criticism for his performance as First Secretary of the PCC Executive Committee in Oriente.

service as either deputy prime ministers or ministers since 1970.<sup>8</sup> The policy of appointing new personnel, whether from civilian or military ranks, on the basis of proven technical competence and organizational skills marked a significant departure from past practices, when leadership posts were generally distributed among Fidel's personal entourage irrespective of their level of professional competence.

Further impetus in the depersonalization drive came with the delegation of decisionmaking authority to these and other appointees within the regime, as limitations were placed on the scope of Fidel's decision-making authority, particularly in economic affairs. In this respect, Fidel needed to devolve greater authority to others, and to restrict his involvement in economic and administrative matters, if only to prevent further slippage in his political power. The erosion of the *líder máximo's* charisma, his disastrous management of economic affairs, and the resulting need for qualified professionals simultaneously enhanced the opportunities of the new appointees for obtaining greater decision-making autonomy and freedom from Fidel's personal interventions in day-to-day affairs. This was particularly true of the FAR appointees, and of President Osvaldo Dorticós and Deputy Prime Minister Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, all of whom possessed independent sources of leverage in dealing with Fidel. The senior military men, for example, not only had needed skills but also a strong institutional base in the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (MINFAR), where most were close associates of Raúl Castro, Minister of the FAR and head of MINFAR. Similarly, both Dorticós and Rodríguez had external backing from Moscow

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<sup>8</sup>The following senior officers from the FAR became Deputy Prime Ministers when that post was created in November 1972: Belarmino Castilla Mas (in charge of Education, Culture, and Science); Pedro Miret Prieto (Basic Industry); Diocles Torralba González (Sugar Harvest); and Flavio Bravo Pardo (Consumer Goods and Domestic Goods). Additionally, one of Cuba's most respected military figures, José Ramón Fernández Alvarez, was appointed Minister of Education in late 1972. Still other senior officers appointed as ministers were Pedro Guelmes (Communications), Antonio Enrique Lusson (Transportation), Manuel Cespedes Fernández (Mines and Metallurgy); and Serafín Fernández Rodríguez (Domestic Trade). With the exception of the latter, all the appointees from the FAR held the rank of Major, which was the highest Cuban military rank at that time.

because they were capable administrators and knowledgeable in economic affairs. By the end of 1972, therefore, they had formally taken charge of policymaking in the domestic (Dorticós) and foreign (Rodríguez) economic fields, while Fidel's role in these fields was evidently circumscribed.

#### Strengthening the Government and Party

Equally as important as the depersonalization drive, the Castro regime announced a major reorganization of administration on November 25, 1972, that strengthened the *structural* capacity of the government to manage major economic activities. A new Executive Committee attached to the Council of Ministers was formed, composed of Prime Minister Castro, First Vice-Prime Minister Raúl Castro and President Dorticós, and seven newly appointed Deputy Prime Ministers. With the exception of Raúl Castro, each member of this supercabinet was given responsibility for the direction, control, and coordination of a particular group of ministries and agencies that engaged in related activities.<sup>9</sup>

New laws were also introduced for reforming the judicial system and the criminal codes, with the judiciary being placed subserviently under the executive organs of government in mid-1973. A year later, an experiment in local government was begun in Matanzas province that will be introduced nation-wide sometime in the future. Known as People's Power (*Poder Popular*), this experiment provides for greater popular participation in local public administration through the election of people's representatives and the convening of public assemblies. However, its major purpose appears to be the elimination of waste and inefficiencies in government services at the local and regional level through the decentralization of administration.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>The sectors are Construction; Transportation and Communications; Consumer and Domestic Goods; Education, Culture, and Science; Basic Industry; Sugar Harvest; and Foreign Affairs (diplomatic and economic). Additionally, Dorticós assumed supervision over economic planning (JUCEPLAN), banking, foreign trade, labor, and justice, among other activities. Fidel retains control over defense, internal security, agrarian reform, public health, and other lesser activities.

<sup>10</sup>Thus, in explaining the role of the organs of People's Power, Raúl Castro declared that "the establishment of people's power means

Concurrent with the reorganization of the government, Cuban leaders began in 1973 to strengthen the role of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC). In the earlier period there had been considerable role-confusion between the Party and government. Now explicit emphasis was given to differentiating the functions of the PCC from those of the government, in order to promote greater administrative rationality and to enhance the Party's role. The PCC would thus serve as the highest political authority, providing overall political guidance in public affairs. However, it was not to engage directly in administration, a responsibility that was left to the organs of the state at the national, provincial, regional, and local levels.<sup>11</sup>

In the meantime, new leadership was injected into the Party at the highest level. In February 1973, four members were added to the Secretariat (the first additions since the founding of the PCC in 1965) in a move evidently aimed at providing the necessary leadership for re-fashioning the PCC into a governing Communist Party in the Soviet tradition. To this end, the ranks of the PCC rapidly expanded after 1970: party membership reportedly rose to 153,000 in 1973 and then to 180,000 in 1974, in contrast to an estimated 55,000 in 1969. The expansion of the Party's ranks was accompanied by greater attention to ideological instruction for PCC members. *Granma*, the official newspaper of the PCC, began a regular reproduction of the Party's educational materials, including lengthy treatises on the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

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decentralization at all levels of the state apparatus...." Such decentralization was necessary because the "total centralization of even the most insignificant aspects of administration in many cases really means anarchy and decentralization in matters which should be centralized." *Granma*, September 9, 1974, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Raúl Castro acknowledged that in the past "we worked without an adequate party or state structure and without a clear definition of the interrelations and limitations of each." He then went on to remind his listeners that, while it constituted "the maximum agency of leadership within our society," the Party nevertheless "does not administer" and "must never meddle" in administrative matters. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

### A Socialist Constitution and Party Congress

Further steps for institutionalizing the Revolution came with the drafting of Cuba's first "socialist constitution," which was delivered to Fidel in February 1975, and published on April 10. The draft was approved in principle by the PCC Political Bureau and submitted for public discussion through fall 1975, after which the Party Congress will draw up the final charter in December 1975. It will be presented to the Cuban electorate in a referendum sometime in 1976.

The draft represents Cuba's first "socialist constitution." It will also be the first constitution since the 1940 constitution was suspended in 1952 by Batista's *coup d'etat*. Consequently, the draft formalizes the institutional changes that have transpired under the Castro regime, as well as creates new state and governmental organs for constructing socialism. The draft makes the PCC into "the highest leading force of the society and state, which organizes and guides the common effort toward the goals of the construction of socialism and the progress toward a communist future." It further preserves Cuba's post-1959 mass mobilization organizations, such as the Central Organization of the Cuban Trade Unions, the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, and the Federation of Cuban Women.<sup>12</sup>

The draft constitution also bears resemblance to the 1936 Soviet charter which may be appropriate to Cuba's stage of socialist construction. Accordingly, an entirely new, popularly elected "National Assembly of People's Power" is designated as "the supreme organ of state" that is nominally vested with final "constituent and legislative authority." It is to meet twice a year and is equivalent to the Supreme Soviet in the USSR. The National Assembly, in turn, elects from among its members a 31-member Council of State, which would be the new Cuban counterpart to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. As in the Soviet tradition, it is to have a "collegial character," making decisions by simple majority vote. Similarly, the draft constitution distinguishes the organs of State from those of the Government. Accordingly, there is a Council of Ministers, as in the USSR, which is designated as "the

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<sup>12</sup>Granma, April 20, 1975, p. 7.



highest ranking executive and administrative organ and [which] constitutes the Government of the Republic."<sup>13</sup> It will be the main governmental decisionmaking body, and will also be headed by the President.

Despite the similarities to Soviet state and governmental bodies, however, the draft charter also reflects Cuba's own political realities as they have existed since 1959, particularly the central role of Fidel Castro. The Cuban state will thus be formally represented by an individual office-holder, the President, who is designated as the "head of State," rather than by a collegial body as in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. Additionally, the President in Cuba will wear two hats, since he is also designated as "head of Government," in contrast to the Soviet Union where the highest representative of the State and Government are separate. Hence, the Cuban President will preside over both the Council of State (however ceremonial and nominal its duties may be) and the more pivotal Council of Ministers. Finally, the draft constitution not only empowers the President to appoint ministers but also to "assume the supreme command of the Revolutionary Armed Forces," in contrast to the Soviet Union, where there is no designated supreme commander. Indeed, the draft constitution appears in this respect to provide formal recognition of Fidel's concentrated powers.

This constitutional restructuring could have far-reaching *political* implications. Specifically, it will differentiate the functional roles for the Party, mass organizations, and state and government bodies. It will specify the authority relationships between these organs. And it will invest specific offices with formal power, giving the President concentrated powers as Head of both State and Government, and as supreme commander of the armed forces. Within the regime, therefore, finalization of the constitution entails high political stakes because it could

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<sup>13</sup> *Granma*, April 20, 1975, p. 9. The Council of State will consist of one President, one First Vice President, five Vice Presidents, and 24 other members, represents the National Assembly between sessions, and "for national and international purposes it is the highest representative of the Cuban state." The Council of Ministers will include the President, the First Vice President and the five Vice Presidents that form the Council of State, plus governmental ministers, the president of the Central Planning Board, and others that may be specified.

ultimately affect the balance of power between influential elites. Hence, the Party Congress, scheduled for late 1975, is to decide on the definitive version before it is submitted to the populace at large in a referendum.

The convening of the PCC Congress, the first since the Party was founded in 1965, is the capstone to the institutionalization of the Revolution. Indeed, 1975 is officially declared to be the "year of the first Congress." In line with the professed objective of "democratizing" Cuba's political process, representation at the Congress will be based on a system of direct and indirect election of delegates. The delegates at the Congress, then, will take up such critical matters as the following:

- o analyzing the draft constitution;
- o drafting the Party platform on domestic and foreign policy;
- o determining the system to direct the economy;
- o adopting the guidelines for future political, economic, and social activities;
- o defining the role of the organs of People's Power;
- o splitting up Cuba's six provinces into new political-administrative regions; and
- o electing the members of the Central Committee.<sup>14</sup>

Hence, the decisions made by the Congress will involve fundamental political and economic policy orientations, as well as the very structure and organization of the Cuban state.

The outcome of the Congress could have a decisive and perhaps long-term effect on the internal balance of power within the regime, owing

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<sup>14</sup>The delegates to the Congress will be elected at municipal, sectional, and regional levels, with final representation at the Congress consisting of one delegate per 100 Party members or candidate members for each of the six provinces, the Isle of Pines, and the Revolutionary Armed Forces and Ministry of Interior.

For a full description of the activities and agenda of the Congress, see Castro's "Call for the Congress," *Granma*, April 27, 1975, p. 1. The splitting up of the provinces into new regions was discussed by Fidel in his July 26, 1975 address.

to the election of a new Central Committee which in turn will select the Political Bureau and Secretariat. The upcoming first Party Congress has thus prompted, and could still portend, a more intensive jockeying for power within the regime. This development will be discussed shortly.

#### SOVIET INFLUENCE AND HAVANA'S NEW ORTHODOXY

The institutionalization of the Revolution has enabled the Soviet Union to constrain Cuba's headstrong *líder máximo*, and to safeguard its increasing economic, political, and ideological stake in the Western Hemisphere. Moscow has achieved this since 1970, in part, by ensuring that Cuba's pattern of institutionalization generally followed Soviet lines. As we have seen in the preceding sections, the PCC is being strengthened in the Leninist tradition; posts of the Deputy Prime Minister in the new Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers are modelled after the Soviet pattern; the local organs of People's Power bear resemblance to the local Soviets; and the draft constitution borrows a number of features from the 1936 Soviet Constitution. Beyond mere imitation of the Soviet model, however, the institutionalization of the Revolution has been accompanied by (1) an increase in direct Soviet influence in Cuba affairs, and (2) the abandonment of *fidelista* policy positions in favor of a new Soviet-style orthodoxy on both the domestic and foreign fronts.

#### Heightened Soviet Influence

Soviet control over Cuban policymaking has developed indirectly through the rising influence of individual leaders who are at least more sympathetic to Soviet interests than were the *fidelistas*; and directly through growing economic integration with the Soviet bloc and dependence on Soviet advisors in Cuba itself. In the first instance, the diminution in the power of Fidel and his *fidelista* associates in the post-1970 period permitted others to gain influence, including old-guard Communists from the former Moscow-oriented Popular Socialist Party (PSP).<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>The elevation of old communists has also been accompanied by the official redemption of the old Popular Socialist Party itself despite

Among the latter, the most important is Carlos Rafael Rodríguez. He was appointed chairman of the joint Inter-Governmental Soviet-Cuban Commission for Economic, Scientific, and Technological Cooperation in December 1970. Next he also became Deputy Prime Minister responsible for foreign economic and political affairs, when the new Executive Committee to the Council of Ministers was created in November 1972. Rodríguez is one of the few ex-PSP leaders who evidently enjoys the confidence of Fidel as well as the Soviets; he is highly competent, urbane and pragmatic, and lately has undertaken important negotiating missions to Moscow and elsewhere.

Other important PSP leaders who have gained in prominence since 1970 include Blas Roca, the former Secretary-General of the PSP, and Isidoro Malmierca and Flavio Bravo.<sup>16</sup> President Osvaldo Dorticós, who reportedly had some informal ties to PSP leaders before 1959, and who often negotiated with the Russians in the 1960s and 1970s, has also risen in importance. As President and member of the Executive Committee, he now directly supervises the Central Planning Board (JUCEPLAN), the National Bank, and the Ministries of Foreign Trade, Labor, and Justice.

Cuba's growing economic integration with the Soviet camp offers Moscow the means for more direct influence. A major conduit has been

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earlier discredit for its collaboration with Batista and passivity during most of the anti-Batista struggle. Although acknowledging that the PSP experienced "countless vicissitudes" during its history, Fidel thus paid tribute to the role of the old Communist Party "in the dissemination of Marxist-Leninist ideals and in the awakening of revolutionary awareness among our workers and peoples." See his eulogy on the 50th anniversary of the founding of Cuba's first Marxist-Leninist party in *ibid.*, September 7, 1975, pp. 2-3.

<sup>16</sup>Roca has chaired the PCC committees responsible for developing the local People's Power experiment in Matanzas, for introducing changes in Cuba's legal system, and for devising the draft constitution. Malmierca was appointed to the expanded PCC Secretariat in February 1973; Bravo became a member of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers in charge of Consumer and Domestic Goods Industries. Bravo's ascendance may well have been due more to his close association with Raúl Castro and MINFAR than to his pre-1959 affiliation with the PSP. Similarly, Jorge Risquet's appointment to the PCC Secretariat can be traced to his ties with Raúl, under whose command he served in 1958, rather than to his earlier membership in the PSP's Socialist Youth organization.

the aforementioned Inter-Governmental Soviet-Cuban Commission for Economic, Scientific, and Technological Cooperation, which was established in 1970 as the institutional locus for the coordination of economic plans between the two countries. Fifteen months after the Commission's creation, Rodríguez thus informed *Pravda's* readers that "...there is not a single sector of our national economy which is to any degree important in which this cooperation [by the USSR] does not already exist or is not planned."<sup>17</sup> Cuba's economic integration into the Soviet bloc accelerated when Rodríguez announced in Moscow in July 1972 that Cuba had been admitted into COMECON as a full member. By early 1974, he also confirmed that the Cuban and Soviet five-year plans for the 1976-80 period were being coordinated by their respective central planning agencies, JUCEPLAN and Gosplan.<sup>18</sup>

These measures heightened the island's already extreme dependency on the socialist bloc. As one observer noted,

Cuban dependence on the USSR seemed to have reached a point of no return in 1972. Some 60 percent of Cuban trade was with the Soviets (70 percent with COMECON), approximately the same proportion it had been with the United States in the 1950s.... Because of the bad sugar crops of 1971-1972 (and a bad tobacco crop in 1971), Cuba's cumulative trade deficit to the USSR may have increased to \$3 billion by 1972. Cuba's total debt to the Soviet Union in 1972 was probably close to \$4 billion if the annual repayment of loans (\$130-150 million) plus interest, shipping costs, and the cost of maintaining Soviet technical and military advisors were added.<sup>19</sup>

In the meantime, Cuba's trade with the Soviet Union rapidly increased after 1972, rising from 821.7 million rubles in that year toward a projected 2,000 million in 1975, according to official Cuban sources.<sup>20</sup> The major share consisted of Soviet exports to Cuba, while the latter

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<sup>17</sup>*Pravda*, March 11, 1972, as quoted in Gouré and Rothenberg, op. cit., p. 54.

<sup>18</sup>*New Times*, No. 1, January 1974, p. 13.

<sup>19</sup>Mesa-Lago, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

<sup>20</sup>See Gouré and Rothenberg, op. cit., p. 43.

consistently ran trade deficits with the USSR. More importantly, Soviet exports to Cuba continued to account for over half of Cuba's *total* imports: 57.5 and 55.9 percent in 1972 and 1973, respectively. Meanwhile the island remained almost totally dependent upon the importation of Soviet petroleum, which in 1972 made up 97.9 percent of Cuban oil imports.<sup>21</sup>

Cuba's position as a dependent, debtor country eased when new long-term Soviet-Cuban economic agreements were signed by Fidel in Moscow at the end of 1972. Under the agreements, Cuba's large debt to the Soviet Union was deferred to 1986, after which it will be repaid over the next 25 years at no interest. Additionally, the Soviets provided new credits to cover expected trade deficits for the 1973-75 period, also to be repaid without interest after 1986. And the Soviets agreed to pay 11 cents per pound for sugar, at that time 2 cents more than the world price, and \$5,000 per ton for nickel and cobalt.<sup>22</sup>

The Cubans paid a price for Soviet generosity, however. In the first place, the Cuban economy was virtually mortgaged to the USSR until 1986. By then, Cuba must develop new industrial and agricultural capacity if the accumulated indebtedness is to be repaid. Meanwhile, the Soviet agreements prevented Havana from greatly reducing its present indebtedness (estimated to have reached over \$4.3 billion in 1974) through sugar sales on the booming world markets during the 1973-75 period. Even after an adjustment to 20 cents per pound in 1974, the Soviet price lagged far behind the world price, which reached a historic high of 66 cents in November 1974 and averaged 30 cents for that year.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Data is taken from *ibid.*; The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Quarterly Economic Review--Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Puerto Rico*, No. 4, 1974, Appendix 2; and Junta Central de Planificación, Dirección Central de Estadística, *Anuario Estadístico de Cuba--1972*, p. 223.

<sup>22</sup>See Castro's speech in *Granma*, January 14, 1973, pp. 2-3.

<sup>23</sup>The Soviets raised their purchase price for Cuban sugar to slightly over 12.8 cents per pound in 1973 in response to the rapidly rising price of sugar on the world market. The Soviet price for Cuban sugar was pegged at 20 cents per pound in 1974. Official Cuban sources had anticipated 30 cents a pound from the Soviets in 1975, but this now seems unlikely because of the drop in world prices.

The very fact that the new agreements represented a vast increase in the Soviet economic stake in the island suggests that Moscow obtained major Cuban concessions aimed at improving the regime's economic performance and guaranteeing the Soviet investment. As noted, these safeguards included the reorganization of administration along Soviet lines, greater rationality in economic planning, and economic integration into the Soviet bloc.<sup>24</sup> The agreements further suggest that Moscow had new confidence in its own ability to direct Cuban economic policy not only through such instruments as the Inter-Governmental Commission and COMECON, but also through the presence of Soviet advisors and technicians on the island itself.

The new influx of Soviet advisors and technicians arrived soon after the establishment of the Inter-Governmental Commission in December 1970. Recent estimates from Cuba place the total number of Russians at 6,000 at least, of which some 3,000 or more are civilian economic technicians and specialists.<sup>25</sup> These reportedly have been placed at various levels of the governmental hierarchy and economy, including such key planning organs as JUCEPLAN. The effectiveness of Russian personnel stationed in Cuba is presumably enhanced by the more than 17,000 Cubans who received various types of training in the Soviet Union between 1963 and 1973.<sup>26</sup> Soviet influence also extends to Cuba's national security affairs: there are over 3,000 Soviet military advisors and technicians attached to the armed forces and MINFAR, while officers of the Soviet Security Agency (KGB) reportedly control the Cuban General Directorate of Intelligence (DGI) within the Ministry of Interior

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<sup>24</sup>"In exchange for even greater Soviet investment in the Cuban economy, the Soviet Union has demanded, and received, a much profounder orientation of the Cuban economy toward the Soviet system than had hitherto been the case. Externally, this means the linking of Cuban foreign trade and economic planning on a long-term basis with the USSR and the East European members of CEMA.... Domestically, it means the reorganization of the Cuban economy along orthodox Soviet lines." Goure and Rothenberg, op. cit., p. 53.

<sup>25</sup>See the *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1975, pp. 15-17.

<sup>26</sup>See O. Darunsenkov, "Companions in a Common Struggle," *Mezhdunarodniaia Zhizn*, No. 1, January 1974, p. 26.

(MININT).<sup>27</sup> In sum, the Soviets enjoy control over or direct access to pivotal organs of power and security as well as policymaking in Cuba.

#### The New Soviet Style Orthodoxy

Institutionalization and heightened Soviet influence have been paralleled since 1970 by the steady abandonment of *fidelista* positions on both the domestic and foreign policy fronts. Instead of maintaining the radicalized or extreme leftist postures of the late 1960s, the Cuban regime and Castro himself have made a number of key concessions to Moscow that for all practical purposes have signalled the end of *fidelismo* as a distinctive governing, ideological, and policymaking orientation. As a result, Cuba in the post-1970 period entered the fold of Soviet orthodoxy.

One of the first *fidelista* positions to be abandoned was the ideological claim that Cuba was building "a genuine communist society" through the employment of moral incentives and consciousness-raising, as opposed to the Soviet Union's preferred reliance on material incentives for its labor force. This claim was an affront to the Soviets because it implied that the USSR was less ideologically committed, and that Cuba would in fact arrive first at the final stage of "pure communism." By the end of 1971, however, the Castro regime fell into line: President Dorticós acknowledged that the USSR was in the next-to-last stage before reaching the ultimate communist future, namely "the construction of communism," whereas Cuba still remained far behind in the lowest stage--that of "creating the foundations of socialism."<sup>28</sup>

This ideological retreat had major domestic policy ramifications: it brought the abandonment of the *fidelista* moral economy of the late 1960s and the adoption of Soviet economic methods commensurate with the "building of socialism" in Cuba. Instead of continuing with their plans to phase out the use of money, for instance, the Cubans were

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<sup>27</sup>On the growing subordination of the DGI to the Soviets, see Brian Crozier, "The Soviet Satellization of Cuba," *Conflict Studies*, No. 35, May 1973, pp. 5-18.

<sup>28</sup>See *Granma*, January 2, 1972, p. 12.



forced to recognize the need for monetary transactions and cost accounting in a socialist economy.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the Cuban regime abandoned moral incentives and egalitarian wage distribution policies, and reintroduced Soviet-type work norms for the labor force in an effort to restore labor productivity. These and other policy concessions to Soviet orthodoxy were publicly spelled out during the extraordinary five-day 13th Congress of the Central Organization of the Cuban Trade Unions (CTC) held in November 1973, which was attended by Fidel and Raúl Castro, President Osvaldo Dorticós, and other members of the Party's Political Bureau and Central Committee.

More than any other single event, the discussions and resolutions adopted by that CTC Congress signalled the wholesale replacement of *fidelismo* by a new Soviet orthodoxy in Cuba's economic and labor affairs. Fidel himself provided the *coup de grace* with his closing speech. The *líder máximo* now acknowledged that Cuba was still "constructing socialism," that because of their lack of social discipline the Cuban people were "not yet prepared to live in communism," and that accordingly the socialist work principle must prevail: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work." Various new efficiencies were required, he stressed, if Cuba's economic system was to promote greater savings, production, productivity, and work discipline. Indeed, the basic theme of the CTC Congress was "Produce more, better and at lower cost, and adopt the measures needed to achieve this!"<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Referring to the *fidelistas*, for example, Dorticós stated the following: "In the late 1960s, some people assumed a distorted position disregarding costs as an element of bourgeois economics, as if costs did not play a pivotal role in socialist economics." See his "Control económico y perspectivas del desarrollo de la economía cubana," *Economía y Desarrollo*, May-June 1972, pp. 30-31.

<sup>30</sup> In concrete policy terms, this meant strict cost accounting practices had to be observed in all work enterprises; wage differentials based on skill levels had to be established for the labor force; greater reliance on material incentives was required to reward work performance; work norms were to be established to raise the standards of productivity; and the administration of state enterprises had to be strengthened. See *Granma*, November 25, 1973, pp. 7-11, for Castro's closing speech of November 15.

This new emphasis upon economic efficiency responded to Moscow's insistence that its ever-growing economic investment in Cuba not be squandered, as had happened when *fidelista* guerrilla radicalism prevailed over economic rationality. Conformity with orthodox Soviet practices, in other words, was an indispensable step toward conserving those Soviet resources that had been extended to Cuba.<sup>31</sup> Scarcely two months after the CTC Congress, therefore, Leonid Brezhnev, upon his arrival in Havana on January 29, 1974, expressed satisfaction with Cuban internal developments. The Cuban Revolution, the First Secretary of the CPSU noted, had indeed come of age:

The Cuban Revolution is now 15 years old.... That is why, when it comes to the new regime in Cuba, I believe that less should be said about youth and more about adulthood....

Your society has reached a phase of development in which the inevitable and necessary state of breaking off with the old and searching for new ways marks the gradual transition into the phase of systematic, positive construction. The construction of the Party, the state, and the economy is being effected with assurance and on the proven basis of socialism.<sup>32</sup>

Conformity on the domestic front, in the meantime, was matched by the synchronization of Cuba's foreign policy with Moscow's policies and interests. Beginning in 1970, Fidel began publicly to praise the USSR in marked contrast to his defiant stands in the late 1960s.<sup>33</sup> Ultimately, he stepped forward as the Soviet Union's most stalwart champion in the Third World, and even attacked the theory of two imperialisms

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<sup>31</sup> During the visit of Premier Alexei Kosygin to Cuba in October 1971, for example, Castro declared that, "One way to express our gratitude to the USSR for their great aid is to extract the maximum out of the Soviet equipment, to use it efficiently, and to keep it in running condition." Cuban radio broadcast of October 27, 1971, as cited by Mesa-Lago, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>32</sup> *Granma*, February 10, 1974, p. 4.

<sup>33</sup> Honoring Lenin's birth on April 22, 1970, Fidel thus paid public tribute to the Soviet state without which "it would have been impossible for Cuba to become the first socialist country in Latin America," and he harshly attacked Moscow's critics abroad who had condemned the USSR for the intervention in Czechoslovakia. See *ibid.*, May 3, 1970, pp. 2-5.

at the Conference of Non-Aligned Countries in Algiers in September 1973--a performance that provoked sharp rebukes from Prince Sihanouk and Premier Qaddafi, and discredited him among other delegates at the conference.<sup>34</sup>

Elsewhere, Havana moderated its policy toward Latin America and thereby promoted Cuban as well as Soviet interests in the region. By muting its public stance on armed revolution, and curbing its active support for guerrilla groups after 1968, the Cuban regime was no longer out of phase with Moscow's primary objective of broadening relations with individual Latin American governments. Abandonment of its militant revolutionary line also enabled Cuba to break its hemispheric isolation by diplomatic as opposed to revolutionary means.<sup>35</sup> Havana thus restored diplomatic and commercial relations with such important countries, in addition to Allende's Chile, as Argentina (1973), Peru (1972), Venezuela (1974), and Colombia (1975), despite the fact that the latter three were once targets of *fidelista* revolutionary activities in the mid- and late 1960s. All told, nine members of the OAS had restored diplomatic and commercial relations with Havana by 1975, notwithstanding the existence of hemispheric sanctions against Cuba.

Havana also became more supportive of the policy of détente following Brezhnev's visit to Cuba in January-February 1974, and as a result it began to soften its posture toward the United States. Beginning in 1974, for example, *Granma* has used less venomous language and slanted reporting with respect to the United States, while Castro has limited

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<sup>34</sup>Castro's sudden break in diplomatic relations with Israel at the time of the conference may thus, in part, have been an attempt to recover lost prestige among the Arab states. On the other hand, the move may also have been prompted by Havana's long-standing solidarity with the anti-Israeli cause as evidenced by the presence of Cuban military personnel in Syria.

<sup>35</sup>Havana's new line was clearly enunciated by Fidel on April 22, 1970, when he referred to Cuba's policy toward the new Peruvian military government: "[Cuban] support does not necessarily have to be expressed exclusively in favor of guerrilla movements, but [can be extended] to any government which sincerely adopts a policy of economic and social development and of liberating its country from the Yankee Imperialist yoke; no matter by what path that government has reached power, Cuba will support it." *Granma*, May 3, 1970, p. 5.

himself to less offensive language when referring to Washington and U.S. officials. Additionally, Havana evidently signalled its readiness to move toward an accommodation with the United States, if not to influence U.S. policymaking indirectly, by allowing influential U.S. citizens to visit Cuba for the first time. Visas were granted to Pat Holt of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Senators Jacob Javits and Claiborne Pell in 1974; to select members of the academic community who have ties to the foreign policymaking community (Kalman Silvert, James Theberge, Samuel Huntington, and Abraham Lowenthal through June 1975); and to Senator George McGovern in May 1975, whose entourage included Barbara Walters, who interviewed the Cuban leader for NBC television.

In the meantime, Deputy Prime Minister Carlos Rafael Rodríguez reiterated that any "dialogue" between Havana and Washington would have to be preceded by the latter's lifting of the economic blockade. For the first time, however, he also softened Cuba's condition: the lifting of the blockade "could comprise various phases and assume various forms."<sup>36</sup> Fidel clearly signaled Havana's readiness to begin the dialogue, and explicitly specified Cuba's preconditions in his May 7th televised conference during McGovern's visit. If the United States were to lift its ban on selling foodstuffs and medicines to Cuba, he said, this "significant gesture" could lead to a reconsideration of Cuba's policy toward the United States and to talks between the two governments.

Even with respect to the "imperialist" United States, therefore, Cuba's new foreign policy seems once again to be in phase with Moscow's policy of détente. Whether the recent impulse toward an accommodation with Washington comes solely or primarily from Soviet pressures on the Cuban leadership, however, is a fundamental question that will be treated later in this study.

#### THE PARADOX: THE RESURGENCE OF FIDEL CASTRO

The "institutionalization of the Revolution" and Moscow's ascending influence initially led to the "marginalization" of the *fidelista*

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<sup>36</sup> *Le Monde*, January 16, 1975, p. 4.

tendency within the Cuban regime, and the restriction of Fidel's authority, particularly in economic matters. The socialist *caudillo* even absented himself from governmental affairs for a total of four months during several extended trips abroad between November 1971 and December 1973, including a 63-day trip to Africa and Eastern Europe in May and June, 1972. Meanwhile, many of Fidel's closest associates were also eclipsed politically in the early 1970s. Most notably, Armando Hart evidently lost his position as PCC Organizational Secretary; Majors Juan Almeida and Guillermo García, both PCC Political Bureau members, came under sharp criticism within the regime on grounds of incompetence; and Major Manuel Pineiro was displaced as head of the DGI, although he retained a Vice Ministerial post in MININT, as a result of his pivotal role in uncovering the pro-Soviet "microfaction" in 1967.<sup>37</sup> As the essence of *fidelismo* gave way to Soviet orthodoxy, the November 1973 CTC Congress marked the final full-scale retreat and perhaps represented the nadir of *fidelista* policymaking influence.

Paradoxical as it may seem, however, Fidel appears to have regained much of his *personal political power* as of 1975. To be sure, Cuba's *líder máximo* clearly gave ground on the need for institutionalization and for basic changes in policy through early 1974. But since then, the outcome of institutionalization has served to strengthen his position within the regime and the masses at large. *Although placing constraints around Fidel Castro's decisionmaking authority, the institutionalization of the Revolution thus has also strengthened his domestic power base.* This recovery of his political position at home has major ramifications for Cuba's foreign policies.

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<sup>37</sup> The "microfaction" was made up primarily of old Communists critical of Castro, and was under the leadership of Anibal Escalante. It established contacts with Soviet bloc embassy officials and other representatives in an effort to undermine the Castro regime. Pineiro's DGI, however, discovered the activities of the "microfaction" and placed it under surveillance beginning in mid-1967. Subsequently, Escalante and 34 other accomplices were tried and sentenced by the PCC Central Committee in January 1968 to prison terms ranging from two to fifteen years.

A New Ruling Coalition and Revitalized Ties with the Populace

Institutionalization posed a major threat to Fidel and his followers because it provided the first real opportunity for other elite elements, particularly among the old Communists from ranks of the PSP, and the new, primarily Soviet-trained technocrats and managers, to impose formal constraints on the *fidelistas*. Recognizing this threat, Fidel has shrewdly outflanked the anti-*fidelista* elements by riding with the process of institutionalization and turning it to his own advantage. Specifically, he has accomplished this through three strategems that have enabled him to refashion a new ruling civil-military coalition of elites dominated by *fidelistas* and *raulistas*.

First, he gave in to the demands within his regime as well as from the Soviets for a more ordered system of governance, including the delegation of greater decisionmaking authority to others within the regime. In so doing, he expanded his coalition of supporters within the top leadership to include even those civilian technocrats and military officers who might otherwise have turned against him had he persisted in retaining a highly personalistic type of government. In brief, depersonalization of his rule and delegation of authority meant that these elite elements now gained both new leadership positions and more meaningful participation in the policymaking process.

The broadening of the coalition was necessary because of the critical need to draw on the talents of capable civilian and military professionals. Yet it also prevented these same civilian and military elements from ultimately coalescing independently of Fidel. Although personally loyal to the two Castro brothers, for example, the top ranking officers of the FAR are not necessarily committed to *fidelismo* per se. They value such qualities as rationality, efficiency, and administrative order, which are also qualities esteemed by civilian technocrats and administrators. Given considerable congruence in their value orientations, therefore, the emergence of an independent coalition of technocrats, administrators, and military officers loomed as a distinct possibility in the immediate post-1970 period.<sup>38</sup> In acceding to their

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<sup>38</sup> A very high convergence in elite orientations and attitudes on key issues was found between the military and technocratic-administrative

demands, however, Fidel has precluded such combined civilian-military opposition and instead refashioned the new ruling coalition under his direction.

Second, Fidel pulled nine senior or high level officers from the MINFAR who are loyal to him or at least to his brother, and placed them in the expanded Party Secretariat, the newly created Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers, and at the head of several ministries.<sup>39</sup> This strengthened his power base in two ways. First of all, these appointments prevented less reliable or hostile elements from the ranks of the old PSP from occupying these key positions in the Party and government. And equally critical, the appointment of these senior officers to civilian posts enabled the Castro brothers to promote other officers to the top ranks, thereby further ensuring the personal loyalty of the FAR's top command. Indeed, a new professional ranking system, introduced in December 1973, provided new senior officer ranks equivalent to that of General (instead of Major). Thus, officers who had recently moved up the chain of command, received the new rank of Major General (or Brigade Commander).<sup>40</sup>

Third, since 1974, Fidel as Commander-in-Chief, and Raúl as Minister of the FAR, have assiduously courted the ranks of the armed forces not only at the senior level, but also down to the troop and combat unit level. Over the last year, both *Granma* and the FAR's *Verde Olivo* have

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elements in an unpublished Rand study using a hierarchical cluster analysis. This elite analysis by Edward Gonzalez, Luigi Einaudi, Nathan Leites, Richard Maullin, and David Ronfeldt focused on the divisions within Cuban leadership and future implications for foreign policy.

<sup>39</sup>See footnote 8 (p. 7) for the nine military men assigned to civilian posts.

<sup>40</sup>Under the new ranking system, Fidel Castro was named Commander-in-Chief; and Raúl Castro, Minister of the FAR, became Lieutenant General. His First Vice-Minister and Chief of the General Staff (Senén Casas Regueiro) was given the rank of Major General, as were the other seven Vice-Ministers in the MINFAR--except for the Chief of the Navy who was given the equivalent rank of Commodore--and the heads of the Western, Central, and Eastern armies. At least seven of the MINFAR appointees were appointed to their posts in the 1971-73 period, including Major General Senén Casas Regueiro. For additional background, see Jorge I. Domínguez, "The Civic Soldier," in Catherine M. Kelleher, ed., *Political-Military Systems: A Comparative Analysis*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, Calif., 1974, pp. 209-239.

carried extensive coverage of the Castro brothers participating in ceremonies honoring individual "vanguard officers" and high efficiency combat units. Additionally, veteran officers from the Sierra Maestra campaign reportedly have assumed direction of the PCC organizational meetings within the armed forces in recent years. As a result, both directly and through his brother, Fidel has made sure that he has widespread support in the most institutionalized as well as powerful organ in Cuba today, the Revolutionary Armed Forces. In turn, the close links with the FAR enable the Castro brothers to maintain a solid hold on the Party apparatus: two-thirds of the present Central Committee is made up of military or former military officers; about one-third of the Central Committee consists of military men on active duty; and two of the six provincial First Secretaries of the PCC come from the armed forces.

In the meantime, institutionalization has served to improve Fidel's relationship with the masses at large because greater rationality and efficiency in administering the economy have contributed to Cuba's economic recovery. This, along with soaring world market prices for sugar, enabled the Cuban government to report an annual economic growth rate of 13 percent during the 1971-74 period.<sup>41</sup> While such a claim may be somewhat inflated, independent foreign observers in Cuba have reported an increase in the availability of consumer goods and food-stuffs, and a considerable amelioration of the stark austerity that sapped public morale in the late 1960s. The political consequence of this economic upturn is evidently the enhancement of Fidel's popular image: whereas the more knowledgeable elites may attribute much of the economic recovery to Rodríguez and Dorticós, the popular masses at least

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<sup>41</sup>This was the growth figure given by President Dorticós on Yugoslav television on January 9, 1975. Official Cuban economic indicators must be accepted cautiously, however. No global economic indicators equivalent to gross national product have been released for the years after 1969. And in reporting solely percentage growth rates for the 1970s, Cuban officials appear to be basing their calculations on the increase in "Global Social Product" rather than "Gross Material Product." They also seem to be using current instead of constant prices. Both practices would inflate the reported growth rate.



tend to credit the far more visible and magnetic "Fidel" for the revitalization of the economy. Hence, after perhaps reaching a low point in public esteem in mid-1970, Cuba's *líder máximo* appears to have resumed his role as the popular *caudillo* in Cuban political life.

Finally, Fidel's solid hold on the military and his renewed popularity may well have enabled him to obtain Brezhnev's backing during the latter's visit to Cuba in early 1974. Satisfied with the strengthening of the Party and governmental structures, the Soviet leader may have concluded that there existed no viable alternative to the *líder máximo* at the present time. Certainly the ranks of the Moscow-oriented Communists from the defunct PSP were now becoming increasingly thin and aged with the passage of years, largely as a result of their having lost an entire post-revolutionary generation to the *fidelistas*.

#### The New *Fidelista* Dominance

The futility of a challenge to Fidel by ex-PSP members was evidently recognized by Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, himself a former ranking PSP leader. In a September 1974 address honoring Blas Roca, formerly the PSP Secretary-General, Rodríguez reminded the 66-year-old veteran Communist that he and the rest of the PSP leadership had earlier recognized Fidel as "our new 'elder brother'" in 1959--apparently a veiled warning to his PSP audience that the *líder máximo* still remained very much at the helm of the revolutionary process.<sup>42</sup> That such is indeed the case is suggested by the following developments.

First of all, Fidel's speeches of late recall the old Fidel of the 1960s: they have recently become much longer, and they have a renewed tone of self-confidence, vigor, and command which were noticeably absent from his speeches of the 1970-73 period. Even more significantly, Armando Hart, and Major Juan Almeida and Major Guillermo García are once again publicly prominent. Hart was named to the

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<sup>42</sup>In the 1950s when the prospects for socialism in Cuba "looked very distant," Rodríguez related, "It was then that our new 'elder brother' [*el nuevo hermano mayor*] made his appearance.... Then Blas Roca, himself, had an 'elder brother, a teacher and a friend'." *Granma*, October 13, 1974, p. 4.

sensitive post of provincial First Secretary in Oriente in 1974, with the result that five of the six provincial First Secretary slots are now in the hands of military and civilian leaders long associated with Fidel and his brother.<sup>43</sup>

More than any event thus far, however, the newly created Central Preparatory Commission of the First Party Congress marks the personal triumph of the *líder máximo* over the process of institutionalization and his dominance of the Party. Appointed by the Political Bureau in April 1975, the Central Preparatory Commission "will guide all activities in preparation for the Congress and will orient the drafting and approval of the documents which will later be presented to the Party for approval, or be presented to the people for discussion" [i.e., the constitution]. The Commission thus assumes the role of central gate-keeper that controls representation to the First Party Congress, as well as its agenda and substantive documents. Presided over by Fidel, its membership consists exclusively of the Political Bureau and Secretariat. Consequently, the Commission is heavily weighted in favor of Fidel and six *fidelistas* (Juan Almeida, Guillermo García, Armando Hart, Ramiro Valdés, Sergio del Valle, and Raúl García Pélaez), augmented by Raúl Castro and three *raúlistas* (Pedro Miret, Antonio Pérez Herrero, and Jorge Risquet). The remaining members are President Osvaldo Dorticós and three former PSP members (Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, Blas Roca, and Isidoro Malmierca).<sup>44</sup> Given this *fidelista-raúlista* preponderance in the Commission, therefore, it seems virtually certain that Fidel Castro will emerge in full control of the Party when the Congress convenes in December 1975. As a result, he will be in a position not only to revise the draft constitution to his advantage, but

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<sup>43</sup>The following are the provincial First Secretaries: Major Julio E. T. Camacho (Pinar del Rio); Major (Dr.) Jose Ramon Machado Ventura (Havana); Captain Julian Rizo (Matanzas); Arnaldo Millan (Las Villas); Major Raúl Curbelo (Camaguey); and Armando Hart (Oriente). Only Millan comes from the ranks of the PSP and has held his post since the 1960s; the other First Secretaries have been appointed over the last four years. Hart was elected to the First Secretary post on March 14, 1974.

<sup>44</sup>See Fidel Castro's "Call for the Congress" in *Granma*, April 27, 1975, p. 1.

also to retain personal and institutional command of the Cuban regime for some years to come.

#### Domestic Developments and Cuban Foreign Policy

An increasingly institutionalized political order, along with heightened Soviet leverage, imposes new constraints on Cuba's foreign policy. The effect of these constraints is demonstrated by the number of significant shifts in Cuban policy in recent years. In rapid order, Havana has forgone the "export of revolution" in favor of broader ties with a growing number of Latin American regimes. It has faithfully echoed the Moscow line on the Sino-Soviet conflict, the possibility of peaceful roads to socialism, and the identity of interests between the Soviet Union and the Third World in the anti-imperialist struggle--all points that were recently reaffirmed in the conference of Latin American Communist parties held in Havana.<sup>45</sup> And finally, since 1974, Havana has softened its anti-American line in a bid to open the way for detente with the United States.

As noted, these new policy postures reflect Soviet pressures on the Castro regime. On the other hand, many also correspond to Cuba's own internal developments in the post-1970 period. Of these, the most decisive have been the expansion in the coalition of policymaking elites to include not only the military, but also the civilian technocrats and administrators, and the resulting priority given to greater economic rationality at home and broader economic ties abroad. Hence, Cuba's new foreign policy tends to be constrained both by Soviet demands and by new domestic political elites and developmental priorities.

Despite these externally and internally imposed constraints, recent political developments suggest that Fidel continues to exercise considerable control over the agenda and management of foreign affairs. Specifically, the shoring-up of his political power at home now allows him more flexibility and leverage in his foreign policy than at any time since the late 1960s.

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<sup>45</sup> See the conference declaration in *Ibid.*, June 22, 1975, pp. 2-3. The conference was attended solely by established pro-Moscow parties to the exclusion of Maoist and *fidelista* groups.

The important effect of domestic politics on Fidel's foreign policy is readily apparent in his new, more reasonable posture toward the United States. Only when he was fully in control of the domestic power struggle did he publicly declare his readiness to begin moving toward a "dialogue" with Washington. By way of contrast, he publicly quashed any possibility of searching for an accommodation with Washington during 1968, when the Soviets were applying economic pressures, and internal discontent was becoming widespread.<sup>46</sup> Even as a way to elude Soviet domination, such a rapprochement at that time would have been extremely inopportune and risky because of domestic weakness: the internal power balance could well have shifted against the *líder máximo* if more moderate elements were strengthened by new ties with the United States. Still later, when the Soviet presence was rising in the early 1970s, the Cuban leader again resisted both Cuban as well as Soviet pressures to ease the relationship with the United States even though this policy option was in Cuba's long-range interests. Indeed, it was fully fifteen months *after* Brezhnev's visit that Fidel finally made his major accommodative gestures toward Washington during the McGovern visit in May 1975. By then, however, the outcome of the behind-the-scene power struggle had been decided in Fidel's favor, as evidenced only a month earlier by the announcement regarding the new PCC Preparatory Commission.

Fidel's renewed political dominance at home, therefore, strengthens the likelihood that Cuba's foreign policy will be less rigid and militant toward the United States, as well as Latin America, than in the past. Together with the island's improving economic situation, and stronger commitments from the Soviets, his political resurgence allows him to pursue innovative and accommodative policies that only a few

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<sup>46</sup> On the occasion of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, Fidel adamantly rejected the idea of an accommodation: "Never, under any circumstances--and the comrades of our Central Committee know this; they know this is the line adopted by our Committee--never, under any circumstances, even in the most difficult circumstances, will this country approach the imperialist Government of the United States.... Because, gentlemen, that would be the moment at which the Revolution would have ceased to exist." Ibid., August 25, 1968, p. 4.

years ago would have weakened revolutionary élan among his faithful followers and sapped the Revolution of its identity. On the other hand, his reconstituted power base and his renewed backing from Moscow also will induce him to bargain hard with Washington. In fact, the Cuban regime today exhibits a new sense of self-confidence at home and in its relationship to the world at large. This and other Cuban perceptions of the international scene are explored in the section that follows.

### III. DICHOTOMIES IN CUBA'S INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Today a new sense that the Revolution has been successful and secure pervades elite perspectives. Confidence and pride thus mark the Cuban approach to exploring new opportunities for diverse foreign relations. Yet this positive perspective is also fused with the knowledge that Cuba, the island, remains dependent and increasingly vulnerable to global economic factors beyond the regime's control. Indeed, the very developments that seem to create fresh opportunities for success also pose major risks and uncertainties. The dichotomies inherent in Cuba's global perspectives may mean, therefore, that their pride and confidence must be tempered by some caution and compromise in the formulation of their new foreign policies.

#### THE REVOLUTION SEEN AS SUCCESSFUL AND SECURE

Despite earlier setbacks and anxieties, a number of favorable developments at home and abroad have imbued the Cuban leaders (above all, Fidel himself) with a growing sense of self-confidence and pride in their achievements. In domestic areas, the institutionalization of the Revolution no longer poses a threat to Fidel and his closest followers. It has taken place without a debilitating power struggle, and the Castros have emerged with a strengthened power base, not only in their traditional stronghold, the military, but also in the rapidly expanding Communist Party. In short, they are now in firm control of the process of institutionalization. The more orderly system of government has helped to spur Cuba's economic recovery following the production failures and other dislocations in 1970.

The improvements in economic performance provide the Cuban leadership with concrete evidence that the worst is over for the Revolution. In early 1975 President Dorticós claimed that the Cuban economy had realized an annual growth rate of 13 percent after the setbacks of 1970. Meanwhile, booming world prices for sugar helped Cuba achieve a favorable trade balance of 1.3 billion rubles in 1974, the first since 1960,

while a 2.0-billion-ruble balance has been predicted for 1975.<sup>47</sup> Western sources also anticipate that a relatively high but credible growth rate of six percent will be programmed for Cuba's 1976-80 economic plan. While such growth is by no means foreordained, it may well be that the Cuban economy is presently in its strongest condition since 1959. These favorable developments, together with earlier triumphs over U.S. "aggression," have also generated considerable psychological gratification: the Cuban leaders appear intensely proud that the "Yankees" were proven wrong, and that, contrary to expectations, the Cubans have demonstrated that they possess the resourcefulness, discipline, and organization to manage a viable economy.

Developments on the international front in recent years have greatly contributed to Havana's new sense of security and confidence. These include strong Soviet economic commitments that go beyond assuring the bare survival of the regime. Furthermore, global military and political developments--in particular, the spreading growth of Soviet strategic power, the apparent weakening and retreat of U.S. imperialism, and the emergence of nationalist and progressive governments in Latin America--appear to favor Cuba.

#### Soviet Commitments

Since 1972 the Cubans have obtained important new commitments from the Soviet Union that tend to assure the continued development and diversification of the island economy. Long-term economic agreements signed in December 1972 authorized the deferment of debt repayments until 1986. They also set a stable price for Cuba's export commodities and extended new credits. Later, the Soviet price for Cuban sugar was readjusted in 1973 and 1974 in an attempt to keep pace with rising world prices. A subsequent protocol concerning Cuba's nickel industry, signed in Moscow in September 1974, called for the reconstruction of existing processing plants and the building of a large-scale mining

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<sup>47</sup> The Soviet ruble averaged \$1.30 per ruble in 1974, and its rate in June 1975 is \$1.32. Thus, a 2.0-billion-ruble trade balance will be equivalent to over \$2.6 billion in 1975.

complex at Punta Gorda in eastern Cuba. As a result, Cuba's annual nickel production is scheduled to increase from around 36,000 tons at present to at least 90,000 tons by 1980, adding potentially more than \$300 million to the island's annual export earnings.<sup>48</sup>

New commitments, the growing integration of the two economies, and the Brezhnev visit in early 1974, the first official visit by a First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), have provided reassuring evidence that the Cuban regime will not be forsaken by its international patron. Similarly, the Soviet submarine-servicing and recreational facility in Cienfuegos, the periodic visits by Soviet naval flotillas, and the stop-overs by Soviet reconnaissance planes further suggest the island's military value for the USSR, and perhaps symbolize a Soviet commitment to Cuba's defense. Such developments stand in sharp contrast to past events when the Castro regime felt abandoned as well as betrayed, as, for example, during the height of the missile crisis in October 1962, and later, when the Cubans saw Moscow eschew military intervention on behalf of another ally, North Vietnam.

#### Growing Constraints on U.S. Imperialism

The Cuban leaders no longer feel threatened by the United States. On the positive side, they are heartened that the Ford Administration has been considerably less hostile and more pragmatic in its public stance on Cuba than was its predecessor. Thus, Secretary of State Kissinger announced in March 1975, that the U.S. Government saw "no virtue in perpetual antagonism between the United States and Cuba." Moreover, Cuban leadership knows that the U.S. Congress is not only more liberal, but also considerably more independent of the Executive

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<sup>48</sup>The planned increase in nickel output may require an overall investment of \$600 million, with the USSR and possibly other Soviet bloc countries contributing the major portion. See Leon Gouré and Morris Rothenberg, *Soviet Penetration of Latin America*, University of Miami, Center for Advanced International Studies, Monographs in International Affairs, Coral Gables, Florida, 1975, pp. 59-60. See also the preceding chapter for greater detail on the 1972 agreements and on Cuban-Soviet integration plans.



Branch on foreign policy issues. The decline in the relative power of the President vis-a-vis Congress and the breakdown of the U.S. foreign policy consensus enable Havana to spot what it regards as opportunities for influencing U.S. policy; this can be evidenced by the visas extended to Senators Javits, Pell, McGovern, and Abourzek.

The slow but progressive erosion of support within the U.S. Government for the established U.S. policies toward the Cuban Revolution is matched, in the Cuban view, by a complementary erosion of imperialism around the globe. The Cuban leadership is now convinced that the United States is much weaker than in 1960, that the so-called forces of imperialism are generally in retreat, and that the world balance of power has shifted in favor of socialism. From their view, the might of the Soviet Union is spreading, while U.S. client regimes are suffering "ignominious defeats" at the hands of Third World governments that adhere to socialism.<sup>49</sup> The "Yankee Empire" is falling apart, and the time has passed when the U.S. Government can make and unmake governments as it sees fit.

The Cubans naturally give some credit to the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc for helping to bring about these changes. Nevertheless, they stress more the line that the steady weakening of imperialism results mainly from struggles mounted by Third World countries. Cuba and Vietnam represent one admirable kind of Third World struggle for revolutionary change. But the Cubans also point out that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), through its defense of one raw material, has largely shifted the global balance of power in favor of the Third World as well as the socialist bloc. In Fidel's words:

...capitalism and imperialism are living in a crisis hour.... For many, the capitalist world is on the brink of the most serious disaster it has confronted since the somber periods of the great depression of the '30s.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>See the Castro-Dorticós message to the Provisional Government of South Vietnam, *Granma*, May 11, 1975, p. 3.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, October 27, 1974, p. 3.

...for the first time in the history of international relations a group of underdeveloped countries have managed to set their own trade terms for their basic materials vis-a-vis the developed capitalist world.... And they are accumulating extraordinary amounts of surplus funds formerly under the exclusive control of the developed capitalist countries.<sup>51</sup>

The international significance of such developments, according to Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, is that the United States and other Western powers now have to "recognize that the days for imposition by force are gone forever and that the time has come for discussion among equals."<sup>52</sup>

#### The New Latin America

The evolution of Latin America has clearly favored Cuban interests, while Cuban leaders have finally recognized that they must relinquish their passionate hopes for other revolutions. Fidel has recently declared:

...I do not believe that the possibility of such radical changes as those which took place in Cuba is within sight at this moment. Even though all objective conditions for radical changes in Latin America do exist, it is undeniable that the subjective conditions are not yet present; but we salute the process of change.<sup>53</sup>

Rodríguez has made the same point, though he frames it somewhat differently: "Socialism cannot be built in Latin America overnight. Objective conditions for socialism do indeed exist in certain countries, but there are no immediate possibilities at hand."<sup>54</sup> Such assessments have not demoralized the Cuban leadership. On the contrary, they have found new grounds for hoping to end their lengthy diplomatic and economic isolation from the mainstream of hemispheric affairs.

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., March 30, 1975, p. 4.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., November 24, 1974, p. 10.

<sup>53</sup>Reported in an interview with Mexican newsmen, January 10, 1975.

<sup>54</sup>From an interview originally printed in *Nouvel Observateur*, January 26, 1975.

The Cuban leaders are gratified at the emergence of progressive, nationalist governments practicing independent, assertive foreign policies toward the United States. Fidel is impressed to find:

...changes in the sense of greater independence with respect to the United States, greater national awareness, a greater disposition to defend natural resources, and a greater understanding of what imperialism is and a willingness to confront that imperialism....<sup>55</sup>

And Rodríguez has seen that:

Perhaps we, too, have changed. But it is Latin America which has primarily changed. It is pervaded by irredentist ferments and opposed to Yankee domination. It has gained an awareness of the right to exploit its own resources, of its own cultural unity and of the emerging social forces. These are the roots of convergence among the Third World countries.<sup>56</sup>

Certain specific changes have been most welcomed by the Cubans: political and structural changes in Peru, the Venezuelan stand on natural resource issues, Panamanian efforts to recover the Canal, the international policy of the Mexican government, the rise of military regimes that are anti-imperialist and a spirit of cooperation in the Caribbean.<sup>57</sup> The Venezuelan government, given its petro-wealth, is thought to be in a particularly powerful position for playing a major unifying and liberating role in the hemisphere. The Cubans were pleased when the *peronista* government in Argentina extended \$1.2 billion in a six-year credit package to Cuba in August 1973; they were favored also when the

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<sup>55</sup> Interview with Mexican newsmen, January 10, 1975.

<sup>56</sup> Interview in *La Stampa*, March 23, 1975, p. 9.

<sup>57</sup> According to Fidel, for example, "...the sovereign will of a majority of [Latin American] countries that assert the right to control their wealth, that declare themselves in favor of independent economic development, for relations with the socialist countries... [and] that disregard imperialism's dictates and exercise a sovereign foreign policy is making itself felt with a relentless force." *Granma*, October 27, 1974, p. 3.

first \$200 million increment forced the Nixon Administration the following spring to license the export to Cuba of motor vehicles manufactured by U.S. subsidiaries based in Argentina.

The Cubans perceive that the nationalist governments comprise an emerging majority against the so-called fascist governments. Thus, a growing number of Latin American governments have expressed support for Cuba's reintegration into the inter-American community. More than half the members voted for the removal of OAS sanctions at the Quito conference in November 1974. Fidel approved their stand, remarking that "...if any of those governments should make the decision to re-establish relations with Cuba, we would have no objection.... For the rest, what's the hurry? Why should we be impatient if we are winning....?"<sup>58</sup> The subsequent lifting of OAS sanctions at the San José conference in August 1975, endorsed by the United States, has further strengthened Cuba's victorious self-image. In the meantime, the restoration of diplomatic relations with several new countries, the visits to Cuba by the heads of government from Guyana, Trinidad and Tabago, and Jamaica in the spring and summer, and the fruitful visit of President Luís Echeverría of Mexico in September, have all reinforced Havana's perspective that the nationalist revival has placed "imperialism" on the defensive, and that it is now Washington that must accommodate to the new constellation of forces which have emerged within the hemisphere.

#### THE ISLAND SEEN AS DEPENDENT AND VULNERABLE

Despite so many favorable new trends at home and abroad, the Cuban elites recognize that their island has become excessively dependent upon the Soviet life-line and newly vulnerable to global economic forces beyond Cuba's control. Indeed, the very same international developments that have improved Cuba's position and opportunities have created dilemmas for its leaders. The more they reach out for new relationships with Latin America, the United States, and Western Europe, the more they expose their island, their Revolution, and their regime to

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<sup>58</sup> *Granma*, December 8, 1974, p. 3.

risks and uncertainties to which they are unaccustomed, if only because the close Soviet ties have served to insulate the Cuban economy from international market conditions. Moreover, as the Cubans reach out, they create interests in the positive disposition of various foreign governments and multinational corporations that they had formerly condemned as agencies of capitalism and imperialism.

This new sense of vulnerability results in part from a loss of past political leverage and from a fresh assessment of future economic and technological requirements. The normalization of relations with a number of Latin American countries, for example, has greatly lessened Cuba's hemispheric isolation. But the Castro regime has also lost its international leverage, previously generated through the "export of revolution," in its dealings with both the United States and the Soviet Union. Castro now poses little revolutionary threat to the United States, nor does he deviate any longer from the Moscow line. For both superpowers, therefore, Cuba is now less a salient issue, and concomitantly, its capacity to extort concessions has diminished.<sup>59</sup>

Meanwhile, trade and technology have become the touchstones of Cuban aspirations to overcome their dependence and vulnerability. Cuba's very success in bringing about domestic economic progress has created new requirements for foreign trade and technology that the Cubans themselves acknowledge lie outside the socialist bloc. At the same time, the current state of scientific-technological achievements at home lags far behind the envisioned requirements for national development. To be sure, top leadership takes great pride in Cuban educational achievements to date. But it also admits to Cuba's continuing "scientific and technological poverty," which according to President Osvaldo Dorticós, poses a "serious contradiction between our

<sup>59</sup> On Castro's use of armed revolution and other divisive issues as a bargaining counter with the Soviets, see Edward Gonzalez, "Relationship with the Soviets," in Carmelo Mesa-Lago (ed.), *Revolutionary Change in Cuba*, University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, 1972, pp. 81-104.

human, scientific, and technical development and the requirements of the scientific and technical revolution that is being imposed on us."<sup>60</sup>

The Cuban leadership is thus searching for capital-intensive "vanguard technology." They have rejected both the labor-intensive "inferior technology" as well as the "intermediate technology" often advocated by foreign economists as the way for an underdeveloped nation to ease unemployment problems while acquiring new skills and capabilities. Unlike many less-developed countries, Cuba no longer has a chronic unemployment problem. On the contrary, a manpower shortage is developing, due in part to some inefficient labor utilization, and to a relatively small active labor force. Cuba's natural resources and economic structure also mean that general development depends to a large degree on agricultural productivity. Since land is limited and the planning of land use is approaching completion, as Dorticós pointed out, "it is impossible to think in any other terms than of highly intensive agriculture and stock-raising."<sup>61</sup> Only the most modern of scientific tools and techniques will suffice.

Above all, the Cubans must modernize their sugar industry, which is now decades old, if sufficient export earnings are to be generated to accelerate the development of light industry. This point has been driven home to Havana by recent international developments. Brazil is overtaking Cuba as the world's leading sugarcane producer and can undersell the latter. Since its record 1970 harvest, moreover, Cuba's sugar production has fluctuated from a low of 4.4 million tons (1972) to an estimated high of about 5.8 million tons (1974).<sup>62</sup> This prevented

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<sup>60</sup> From an address by Dorticós to the Youth Technical Brigade Conference in *Granma* (daily), September 14, 1974, pp. 2-3.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Sugar production in 1973 is believed to have reached 5.5 million tons, although no official Cuban figures for the 1973-1974 harvests have been revealed. The 1975 harvest total also has not been revealed, but reportedly it is one million tons less than the initial target figure.

Cuba from fully exploiting the recent high world prices for sugar. Now, the Cubans find that the world price has plummeted from 66 cents a pound in November 1974, to a current price of less than 12 cents.<sup>63</sup> Yet if sugar is to remain king, capital investments will be required in the 1980s, including some entirely new mills by 1990. Other areas that will reportedly require vanguard technology are construction (of houses, schools, industrial plants, ports, roads, and other transportation infrastructure), communications, health, education, and management.

Cuban leaders recognize that their objectives will pose a serious challenge for the island's small core of educated elites. In 1970, the university-educated people in the civilian sector numbered little more than 29,000 or about 350 per 100,000 population. By 1980, the total number is expected to reach 70,000 for an average of 700 "university professional people" for each 100,000 inhabitants, a ratio three of four times lower than the present ratio in other COMECON countries. Forecasts on the prospects for training intermediate technicians and skilled workers have not yet been made, but the foregoing figures alone indicate a serious lack of technical capacity.<sup>64</sup> Hence, it seems likely that the Cuban government will continue to require considerable foreign technical assistance, advice, and training in order to cope with its development goals.

#### Limited Options in Latin America

While politically advantageous, the new ties with Latin America have not yet led to any significant breakthroughs that would ease Cuba's

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<sup>63</sup>*The New York Times*, June 9, 1975, p. 48.

<sup>64</sup>According to Dorticos, therefore, "the role which a working graduate technician must carry out, and the mission that is his in our revolutionary society, are highly demanding." But while the "new technological generation" still remains "quantitatively small," he nevertheless insists that "it will emerge victorious from this challenge." *Granma* (daily), September 14, 1974, pp. 2-3. Despite such revolutionary rhetoric, however, the fact remains that Cuban leadership has publicly expressed grave concern over Cuba's "scientific and technological poverty" which must be rectified through much greater emphasis upon technical training and possibly educational recycling in order to compensate for the shortage of skilled manpower.

*economic* dependence on the USSR. To be sure, Argentina extended \$1.2 billion in long-term credits. Yet these were extended to enable Havana to purchase high-priced items, such as Argentine automobiles manufactured by U.S. subsidiaries, which are not competitively priced for the export market. In fact, these very same automobiles could have been imported more cheaply from the United States, had Cuba enjoyed trade relations with the latter.

As the Argentine trade ventures illustrate, there are real limitations on Havana's ability to realize major economic gains from its emerging Latin America relationship. With but a few notable exceptions, most Latin American economies are competitive rather than complementary with Cuba's. Moreover, of all of the Latin American countries that now have relations with Havana, only Venezuela, as a petroleum exporter, could significantly affect Cuba's near-term dependence on the Soviet Union. The question, however, is whether Venezuela would be willing to match the preferential oil price of \$5.66 a barrel (less than half the prevailing world price) that the Soviets now give Cuba or whether the Soviets would be willing to subsidize Cuba's importation of the higher priced Venezuelan crude oil. If not, Havana would then be confronted with the alternatives of having to incur the extra costs involved in importing Venezuelan crude oil or continuing its dependence on cheap Soviet oil supplies.<sup>65</sup>

#### Diminishing Returns from Soviet Economic Ties

The Soviet Union's preferential oil price of \$5.66 a barrel serves as a tether that restrains Havana's freedom of action. As Fidel conceded, the Cuban economy has been sheltered from the energy crisis and rising world price of oil by "the generous assistance of the Soviet Union."<sup>66</sup> But the effect of this apparent generosity is to bind Cuba

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<sup>65</sup> Venezuela's importance as a potential oil supplier for Cuba may explain the consistently favorable references to the Andrés Pérez government by *Granma* and the Cuban leadership since the latter part of 1974. However, the importation of Venezuelan crude oil would entail initially high capital outlays in order to reconvert Cuban oil refineries, along with a probably higher price per barrel than Cuba is now paying for Soviet crude oil.

<sup>66</sup> *Granma*, October 6, 1974, p. 3.



more closely to the USSR, particularly if the OPEC countries continue to set even higher world petroleum prices every year or so. In the meantime, Cuban leaders are showing some concern that close economic ties with the Soviets will not meet future Cuban requirements for economic and technological progress, and may lead to diminishing returns from the Soviet relationship.

In the first place, the growing integration of the Cuban and Soviet economies, through bilateral as well as COMECON agreements, imposes structural constraints on Cuba's range of foreign trade options. Once the countries complete the coordination of their economic plans for the 1976-80 period, Cuba's export commitments to the Soviet Union are likely to give the Cubans less freedom than at present to exploit opportunities on the world market. Moreover, the preponderantly barter character, around 80 percent, of Soviet trade arrangements with Cuba will likewise restrict the availability of foreign exchange for trade with Western countries and Japan.

The Cuban leadership is aware of the potential long-range disadvantages of a trade relationship that is locked to the Soviet bloc. Even in the mid 1960s questions were raised about the future limits of Cuban trade with the socialist countries, as compared to the continuing need for imports from the capitalist countries and the eventual relevance of Cuban participation in regional groupings of underdeveloped countries.<sup>67</sup> Recently, when Fidel explained Cuba's entry into COMECON in 1972, he indicated clearly that he would have preferred economic integration with Latin America instead of with the Soviet bloc, had such an alternative been feasible.<sup>68</sup> Carlos Rafael Rodríguez later reiterated that "...by virtue of its historical redevelopment and geographical location, Cuba belongs to the Latin American community. We

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<sup>67</sup> See an article by a then prominent economic analyst Pedro Ríos, "Notas Sobre Planificación Perspectiva," *Comercio Exterior*, Octubre-Diciembre, 1964, pp. 39-72.

<sup>68</sup> "In the future, we will be economically integrated with Latin America.... But that will take time.... Meanwhile, what do we, a small country surrounded by capitalists and blockaded by the Yankee imperialists, do? We integrate ourselves economically with the socialist camp!" *Granma*, August 6, 1972, p. 5.

have never renounced and never shall renounce these ties."<sup>69</sup> The main problem, however, is that Cuban requirements for advanced or "vanguard" technology cannot be met solely through plans for integration into the Soviet bloc. Such technology is essential for sustaining a high growth rate, and for developing modern agro-industrial sectors that will enable Cuba to meet the Soviet debt repayment obligations set for 1986 onwards.

The potential roles for advanced technology are readily apparent. Capital-intensive industries, principally egg production, fishing, and electrical generation, have shown striking, singular production gains over the years because of plant equipment and machinery obtained from Western Europe and Japan as well as from the socialist camp.<sup>70</sup> The modernization and expansion of the nickel industry, planned under the 1974 protocol with the Soviets, also promises future production advances in this area of the economy. Given the central importance of agriculture, however, Cuba mainly requires advanced agricultural technology to ensure its long-term economic development.

Neither the USSR nor Eastern Europe can match the West in agricultural technology, especially that found in the United States. To overcome production deficiencies in the sugar industry, for instance, Cuba has embarked upon a program to gradually expand or replace its antiquated sugar mills, and to introduce mechanical sugarcane harvesting by employing a redesigned Soviet KTP-1 harvester. But initial Cuban experience with the earlier models of the KTP-1 harvester did little to inspire Havana with confidence in Soviet agricultural technology: according to Fidel in 1963, the Soviet harvester was "a great destroyer; where it has been, nothing will grow for a long time to come."<sup>71</sup> Not surprisingly, therefore, the Cuban leadership has been keenly interested in acquiring modern sugar technology elsewhere. Cuba even sent a planeload of officials to the New Orleans conference

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<sup>69</sup>C. R. Rodríguez, "Cuba and CEMA," *Latinskaia Amerika*, No. 6, November-December 1972, p. 47, as cited by Gouré and Rothenberg, op. cit., p. 55.

<sup>70</sup>Junta Central de Planificación, Dirección Central Estadística, *Anuario Estadístico de Cuba--1972*, pp. 226-233.

<sup>71</sup>Quoted in K. S. Karol, *The Guerrillas in Power*, Hill and Wang, New York, 1970, p. 412.

of the International Society of Sugar Cane Technologists in late October 1971, although the U.S. State Department had earlier refused to issue visas.

Such requirements for "vanguard" technology and related skills mean that Cuba must look increasingly to the advanced capitalist countries, as Rodríguez himself has affirmed:

As Cuba gradually develops its investments, its imports of raw material and equipment from nonsocialist countries increase for reasons which also apply to European socialist countries: A whole range of technologies is not yet available in the socialist camp. Some 30 percent of the European socialist countries' foreign trade is directed toward the EEC, Japan, and even the United States. Our own figures are changing in accordance with a similar pattern.<sup>72</sup>

Accordingly, Cuba has been expanding its trade ties with non-Communist countries prior to final integration with the Soviet bloc. Thus, non-Communist countries accounted for 32 percent of all Cuban trade in the early 1970s, with Japan, Western Europe, and Canada alone making up 22 to 25 percent of the total trade turnover.<sup>73</sup> Benefiting from its sugar sales on the booming world market, Cuba's trade with non-Communist countries rose to 41 percent in 1974, with Cuban imports from these countries nearly doubling to around \$850 million.<sup>74</sup> Some degree of dependence upon the advanced capitalist nations, therefore, has become a requirement for Cuba's continued economic development and for easing its client-state relationship with the Soviet Union.

#### The Elusiveness of U.S. Technology and Trade

The pending success of the Cuban Revolution, far from making the Cubans all the more indifferent to the United States, is raising their aspirations for access to U.S. technology. Cuban leaders have

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<sup>72</sup>From an interview in *Le Monde*, January 16, 1975, pp. 1, 4.

<sup>73</sup>*Anuario Estadístico de Cuba--1972*, pp. 194-197.

<sup>74</sup>Central Intelligence Agency, *Intelligence Handbook, Cuba: Foreign Trade*, A (ER) 75-69, July 1975, pp. 3-4.

intimated this fact for several years now. In December 1972, Fidel personally indicated to a Latin American diplomat that he was ready for a rapprochement with the United States in order to be able to purchase U.S. agricultural technology. While he "made it clear that he can still get along without U.S. technology," the Latin American official added, "he is willing to open relations because he is convinced that they would be good for Cuba's economic-development programs." According to this informant, moreover, Cuban interest was not limited to sugar technology: "The Cubans said the Russians are backward in cattle-breeding. That's why they would like Cubans to be able to go to American universities for training." Similar reports came from Edward Lamb, the president of a U.S. enterprise that makes and operates sugar-harvesting equipment, Lamb Enterprises, Inc. After paying a half-dozen visits to Cuba and holding talks with Castro, he found that Cuban efforts to fabricate their own machinery or to obtain Russian copies of Western models had proven to be costly failures. "The only remedy is modernization," Lamb declared, indicating that with modernization Cuba could produce 10-million tons of sugar annually.<sup>75</sup>

The likelihood of an accommodation with Washington is by no means a certainty, however. The Cuban leadership must be aware that its bargaining position vis-a-vis the United States is not strong, notwithstanding favorable sentiment among some Congressional circles. The Cubans lack leverage. They cannot offer major tradeoffs in exchange for renewed relations, as Egypt did in 1972 through its "reversal of alliances," or as China could by opening up a potentially large market for U.S. businesses and by balancing off Soviet power. Nor can Havana effectively threaten to use the export of revolution as a bargaining counter in dealing with the U.S. government, because that revolutionary potential has greatly receded. Indeed, Cuba's principal bargaining asset may now be the \$1.8 billion in certified claims by some 1,000 U.S. companies and 5,000 American citizens whose properties were nationalized by the Castro regime in the 1959-60 period. Yet even here, Cuba's ability to provide compensation is severely limited by the state

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<sup>75</sup> See *The Wall Street Journal*, December 22, 1972, pp. 1, 13, for both observers' comments.

of the Cuban economy. As a result, the claim issue becomes more of an obstacle than an enticement for the U.S. Government to move on the "Cuba issue." At best, the Havana regime can give on the compensation issue only *after* negotiations between the two countries are well under way, and only then in exchange for comparable concessions from Washington, such as the lifting of domestic legislation that has prevented trade with Cuba.

In the meantime, the Cubans see that the Ford Administration is in no hurry to start bilateral talks with Havana, and that Cuba is important to the Administration only insofar as it presents a divisive issue in inter-American relations. Thus, in his May 1975 press conference in Kansas City, Secretary Kissinger sharply rejected the notion that Washington was "about to normalize relations with Cuba," and emphasized instead the U.S. concern to defuse the Cuba issue within the OAS.<sup>76</sup> President Ford reiterated the point even more firmly a month later. In an interview with Pierre Salinger for the French magazine *L'Express*, the President stated that an OAS decision to lift sanctions on Cuba would not affect U.S.-Cuban policy.<sup>77</sup>

In the meantime, with the removal of sanctions at the OAS meeting in Costa Rica in August, Cuba has in fact lost much of its saliency as a divisive issue in inter-American relations. Hence, there is now less urgency for Washington to deal with Havana. And to their dismay, the Cuban leadership will soon discover (if they have not already) that political calculations with respect to the upcoming presidential elections will most likely require the Ford Administration to shelve the Cuba issue until after November 1976.

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<sup>76</sup>See Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *The Secretary of State--Press Conference*, May 13, 1975, p. 2.

<sup>77</sup>"If that decision were made by the OAS, it has no impact on our own decision to continue the boycott by the United States, and our attitude is that we will continue the boycott by the United States until there is some change in policy by Cuba toward the United States" (emphasis added). *Los Angeles Times*, June 15, 1975, p. 13.

Vulnerability to the "International Capitalist Crisis"

The Cubans might have rejoiced over the international economic crisis and its debilitating impact on the United States, as a long-awaited fulfillment of the Marxist prophecy. However, this international capitalist crisis comes at a time when the Cubans are endeavoring to end their long isolation and expand selected trade relations with the advanced capitalist countries. Even though their client relationship with the Soviet Union still helps to shield the island economy, Cuba is increasingly being exposed to market factors over which the Cubans have virtually no influence. Notwithstanding Soviet oil supplies to Cuba, then, the impact of the energy crisis and global inflation has made Cuban leaders acutely aware of a new dilemma: their own economy is becoming dependent upon, and terribly vulnerable to, developments in the "international capitalist system."

Cuban leaders have constantly expressed their alarm that the oil-poor underdeveloped countries, implicitly including Cuba, are bearing the brunt of the crisis. In a major address to the meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Nonaligned Countries, Fidel recently revealed his view:

...Of course, the only real solution to the economic crisis is the disappearance of capitalism from the world. This, of course, will happen some day and partially as a result of the crisis. But what concerns us are the presentday serious problems in an underdeveloped world subject to the voracity and machinations of imperialism, which although in crisis, still has enough powerful economic, technical, political, and military resources to try to impose its solutions and shove the burden of the crisis on the shoulders of its own workers and those of the economically backward countries.<sup>78</sup>

First, these countries must bear the higher oil prices. In addition, they must suffer indirect costs that seem to disturb Fidel even more, as capitalist countries raise "to unprecedented heights the price of technology, equipment, manufactured and semi-manufactured products,

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<sup>78</sup> *Granma*, March 30, 1975, p. 4.

fertilizers, synthetic materials, and many others that developing countries must import."<sup>79</sup>

The vulnerability of Cuba and other Third World countries might be reduced if the OPEC countries established a developmental aid fund, as Fidel has often recommended.<sup>80</sup> Short of this unlikely prospect, however, the Cuban people themselves will have to strain to cover the increasing costs of Western imports on which rest so many hopes for future economic achievements. President Dorticós told sugar workers in October 1974 that,

Since the 1975 harvest will take place in a year with extremely high inflationary prices for the goods which Cuba buys and imports abroad...we have to assure the greatest possible production of sugar in order to obtain the necessary foreign exchange so that in 1975 we can carry out the import program which the country needs.<sup>81</sup>

Even so, the Cuban leaders know that the main solutions lie outside of their country.

The dilemma of the new dependency confronting Cuba and other underdeveloped countries was best elucidated by Rodríguez, when he noted that rising oil prices might plunge the capitalist countries into an economic crisis "without the slightest chance of recovery." Spelling out the potential consequences of such a development for his audience at the FAO World Food Conference in Rome, Rodríguez assumed a Third World stance rather than strictly orthodox Soviet position:

Such an economic collapse--which would confirm the predictions of Karl Marx--can be viewed as a decisive step toward the future. However, such a catastrophe--from which the countries that have embarked upon the road to socialism and whose economies are coordinated *could* emerge without

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., November 2, 1974, p. 2.

<sup>80</sup> For example, see Fidel's speeches in *Granma*, October 6, 1974, pp. 2-3; October 27, 1974, p. 3; and March 30, 1975, pp. 3-4; Dorticós' speech in *ibid.*, November 2, 1974, pp. 2-3; and Rodríguez in *ibid.*, November 24, 1974, pp. 9-10.

<sup>81</sup> *Granma*, November 2, 1974, p. 2.

being dragged down--would result in a great deal of suffering for the workers in the capitalist countries and would also involve *the risk of a prolonged period of backwardness for the peoples struggling for development. Therefore, we cannot declare ourselves in favor of such a doomsday solution to the economic and social contradictions.... This is why we were willing to work with all those who are trying to avert such a world economic crisis... [emphasis added].*<sup>82</sup>

In brief, the international capitalist crisis is dangerous for two reasons:

- (1) The vulnerability of underdeveloped countries like Cuba to global inflation, rising import costs, and even military intervention,
- (2) The potential economic ruination of leading capitalist countries that offer diversified sources of advanced technology and trade needed by those underdeveloped countries.

In effect, both Fidel Castro and Carlos Rafael Rodríguez have determined that Cuba, of necessity, must chart a foreign policy that recognizes the reality of global interdependence.

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<sup>82</sup> *Granma*, November 24, 1974, pp. 9-10.



#### IV. TOWARD PRUDENT FOREIGN POLICY POSTURES

Cuba's new sense of success and security at home, along with promising opportunities for diversified relations abroad, would seem to impel the Castro leadership toward a highly activist foreign policy. Yet, in order to minimize risks to the now established revolutionary order, and to ensure further economic accomplishments after years of faltering performance, Cuban leadership will likely incline toward prudent foreign policy postures. This tendency toward prudence is further strengthened by the new recognition of the island's growing dependence upon and vulnerability to developments in the international capitalist system.

While pursuing an activist foreign policy on most external fronts, therefore, the Cuban leadership is likely to set priorities and adopt strategies that are essentially protective and low risk in nature, and that seek renewed international leverage through the promotion of Third World coalitions. In particular, three related policy objectives will probably gain prominence during the remainder of the 1970s:

- (1) Securing allies in the Caribbean, Latin America, and the Third World;
- (2) Acquiring "vanguard technology" and training from Western sources;
- (3) Minimizing client-state relationships with the Soviet Union without jeopardizing fraternal Soviet-Cuban ties (largely as the outcome of the first two).

In accordance with these objectives, the Cuban regime is revising its posture toward the Soviet Union, and replacing its old strategies with new ones for dealing with the United States and Latin America. Six strategic elements seem especially prominent:

- o In regard to the Soviet Union, the Cuban posture is now emphasizing (1) participation in détente, although this seems to

mask (2) a deep Cuban concern to reduce economic and political dependence as a client-state, without forgoing military protection and otherwise good relations.

- o Toward the United States, the newly evolving strategies emphasize (3) selective, nonviolent "confrontation with imperialism" and (4) cautious negotiations for advanced technology and trade.
- o Toward Latin America, the old strategy of aid to revolution has given way to a new strategy of (5) unity and alliance with progressive, nationalist governments, possibly extending to Cuban provision of (6) conventional military assistance to an ally in the event of a military conflict in South America.

To implement these various objectives and strategies, the Cuban government is generally attempting, and will continue to attempt, to work within established and prospective organizations at the regional and international levels, a task for which they lack considerable experience, because of their long isolation.

These six strategic elements have been separated into three pairs, according to whether they are principally oriented toward the Soviet Union, the United States, or Latin America. As the following discussion discloses, each pair contains a positive and a negative element. This potential inconsistency (perhaps natural for dealing with a complex world) suggests that Cuban foreign policy may frequently appear ambivalent, as Cuban leaders seek to orchestrate their alternative, and sometimes conflicting, objectives and strategies.

#### POSTURES TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION

The Cubans will support Soviet détente policies as a framework for normalizing relations with the United States. However, they will also want a prospective Cuban-U.S. détente to provide independent gains that will advance Cuba's technological and economic requirements, and minimize its status and image as a dependent client-state.

### Participation in Détente

During recent years the Cuban government has reluctantly but finally come to accept détente as a positive and permanent development. Whereas Fidel revealed a grudging compliance during his 1972 visit to Moscow, he indicated considerable support for the Soviet position on détente during Brezhnev's return visit to Cuba in early 1974.<sup>83</sup>

At first the Cuban leadership had approached détente with uncertainty and suspicion, as something that might apply to Europe but that might also presage a weakening of the ideological struggle and a sell-out of allies in the Third World in exchange for U.S. concessions. Any sign of flagging Soviet support for North Vietnam was thought to signify a potential decline in the Soviet commitment to Cuba as well; and détente was expected to be detrimental rather than supportive of Third World struggles. Recent developments have persuaded the Cubans, however, that the world balance of power has shifted in favor of socialism and that imperialism is moving backwards.<sup>84</sup> As a result, the Cubans now regard détente as a victory for the socialist countries, and as a new form of struggle (although not necessarily the only one) suited to current conditions.<sup>85</sup> Accordingly, Cuban foreign policy can now include participation in détente as a major accommodation to the Soviet Union.

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<sup>83</sup>For the recent history, see Leon Gouré and Morris Rothenberg, op. cit., pp. 22-29; and Carmelo Mesa-Lago, *Cuba in the 1970s*, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1974, pp. 15-25.

<sup>84</sup>The Cuban leaders also remain supportive of the Soviet Union in relation to China, though they rarely discuss the matter in public. In early 1975, Fidel told Mexican correspondents his belief that there was only one socialism not two, and that the Sino-Soviet split was not based on objective conditions.

<sup>85</sup>The military journal, *Verde Olivo*, January 5, 1975, p. 19, discussed the Vladivostok accord between Brezhnev and Ford in these words: "This new step in the policy of the Soviet Union for the relaxation of tensions can be measured as one more triumph for socialism in its efforts for the consolidation of peace and as a result of the growing correlation of forces in favor of the socialist camp" (our translation). However, *Granma*, January 12, 1975, p. 10, added a further point about Vladivostok and other détente developments: "Despite these successes, the peoples of the world cannot forget that imperialism has not been completely defeated, and that there remain powerful reactionary forces bent on undermining the important agreements reached," a point made primarily in reference to Third World struggles.

Normalization of relations with the United States is conceived as an element of détente. Thus Rodríguez, when asked during an interview in France whether the resumption of U.S.-Cuban relations would delight the Soviets, replied:

Absolutely. The improvement of our relations with the United States would be written into the détente process. The continuation of a source of tension such as Cuba is not encompassed in Soviet policy.<sup>86</sup>

On a recent occasion, Rodríguez has gone so far as to forecast a resumption of U.S.-Cuban relations in 1976, provided "the process of international détente strengthens." At the same time, the Cuban leaders claim not to be in any hurry to negotiate; they believe that they are winning and that time is on their side.

While the Cubans do not deny Soviet encouragement, they nevertheless have independent reasons, mainly economic, for exploring renewed relations with the United States. Even though they often cloak the prospects of normalization in the language of détente, they in fact seem to regard Soviet-U.S. détente and Cuban-U.S. détente as fairly distinct processes. Each may facilitate the other, yet neither necessarily requires the other. In fact, Cuba's normalization of relations with other Latin American countries has probably been as important as Soviet-U.S. détente in preparing the way for renewed U.S.-Cuban relations.

While Cuban participation in détente should surely ease political relations and threat perceptions, the local implications for the Cuban military may not be so comforting. Détente should reassure the Cubans of the unlikelihood of U.S. military operations against their government. At the same time, however, the Soviets may use détente as an argument for restricting military assistance to Cuba, perhaps rekindling Cuban doubts about prompt Soviet backing in the event of a new local crisis. In brief, détente may place a greater onus on the Cubans to defend themselves in self-reliant fashion at a time when they warn that

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<sup>86</sup>From *Nouvel Observateur*, January 26, 1975.

imperialist forces would still like to lash out against Third World challengers. Certainly this is suggested by Fidel's statement at a military celebration:

We are a small country and our enemy is powerful. And for how long will imperialism remain our enemy? As long as imperialism exists! Our relations with the imperialist government of the United States are anything but good. But even if one day there should be economic and even diplomatic relations between us, that wouldn't give us the right to weaken our defense because our defense can never depend on the imperialists' good faith.<sup>87</sup>

The Cubans have organized new programs to improve their military preparedness. Nevertheless, the Soviets appear to have restricted Cuban access to new weaponry, as indicated by the fact that Defense Minister Raúl Castro returned empty-handed from Moscow in February 1974, on the heels of Brezhnev's visit to Havana that same month, and immediately following Fidel's final subscription to Soviet détente. Hence, détente may well disturb the Cuban military and complicate its attainment of still greater military capabilities.<sup>88</sup>

The Cuban leadership also recognizes that détente does not protect the island from the international economic crisis of the capitalist

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<sup>87</sup> *Granma*, December 1, 1974, p. 7.

<sup>88</sup> The Cubans have recently engaged, with Soviet assistance and possibly at their recommendation, in making major changes in their armed forces. In particular, they have reduced the size of the active duty forces, while also improving their mobilization speed and combat readiness through extensive exercises. A new paratrooper unit was created; a major new general repairs base was constructed; new military schools were inaugurated; and the special work brigades were detached from the professional military. Indeed, the Cubans have had, and for some years will continue to have, one of the best trained and most professional militaries in Latin America. While the recent improvements amount to some increased military capabilities for national defense, they also have increased the local absorptive capacity in case the Cubans convince the Soviets to add new equipment at a later date, or in case the Cubans decide to acquire some items elsewhere. The prospect should not be discarded that the Cuban military might seek to acquire some items from suppliers in Western Europe, Japan, or conceivably even

countries. Thus, commenting as a Third World member more than as a Soviet ally, Foreign Minister Roa warned the Coordinating Bureau of the Nonaligned Countries about the development of

increasingly unbearable conditions of the underdeveloped countries and the alarming rise in international tension, *in spite of the resolute efforts that the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have made and are making to consolidate and extend détente and the relations of peaceful coexistence achieved with the active backing of the nonaligned countries which are vitally interested* <sup>89</sup> *in enjoying their indivisible fruits [emphasis added].*

Détente and U.S.-Soviet relations in general are regarded as having only marginal bearing on what the Cubans consider the major global problem that affects them and their kind: namely, the capitalist economic crisis and its impact on the Third World.

#### Minimization of Client Status and Image

The Cuban leaders realize that their small island nation has exchanged dependence on the United States for a new dependence on the Soviet Union. The island's economic weakness, along with its proximity and vulnerability to the "Colossus of the North," dictated the initial realignment to the Soviet bloc in 1960. Although Fidel strove to remain independent from Moscow, his limited leverage and need for even greater economic assistance finally forced him into closer client relations with the Soviet Union in the late 1960s. Since then, the Cuban leadership has time and again proclaimed itself a loyal, grateful ally of the Soviet Union. So far this decade, conformity with Soviet policies at home and abroad has supplanted the earlier quest for Cuban autonomy.

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the United States within a few years, much as Iran has purchased some nonsensitive items from the Soviet Union.

The Cubans could conceivably use détente and self-reliance as an argument for the acquisition of advanced new weapon systems, such as the MIG-23s, anti-aircraft missiles that impressed the Cubans in Vietnam, and possibly new precision-guided munitions. The Cuban military may already have asked for MIG-23s, but so far the Soviets have not been forthcoming.

<sup>89</sup> *Granma*, March 30, 1975, p. 2 (our translation).

A new tone nevertheless is now noticeable in foreign policy statements of the Cuban leadership that may presage a renewed attempt to recover lost autonomy--or at least to minimize the status and image of Cuba as a dependent client-state of the Soviet Union. During interviews for West European and Third World audiences, Rodríguez in particular has insisted that the Cuban Revolution was not pro-Soviet or socialist at first, and has distinguished political independence from economic independence. While his fellow leaders had some quasi-socialist leanings, their original intention had been to make a "democratic revolution," until U.S. pressures to cut sugar exports and oil imports moved the revolutionary process into socialist channels. Since then, he points out, Cuba has experienced economic dependence on the Soviet Union:

However, this economic dependence is not tantamount to political dependence. At no time during the revolution have our relations with the USSR implied any political dependence with regard to the USSR, and I am certain that they will never imply such a dependence.<sup>90</sup>

Rodríguez, like Castro, insists that at present the major bonds with the Soviets are ideological in nature: "Our bonds are ideological: that does not imply dependence, we do not accept directives."<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, the top Cuban leaders claim to have military independence at least in regard to the weapons they possess. "The Russian tanks in Cuba are in the hands of the people," says Rodríguez.<sup>92</sup> In sum, the Cuban regime is making an earnest effort, at least for purposes of projecting its image abroad, to declare its independence from the Soviet Union in political matters, and to raise anew the implication that economic dependence is largely attributable to past U.S. policies.

Cuba's quest for greater national autonomy does not envisage departure from the socialist system. Though initially born of expediency,

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<sup>90</sup>*Le Monde*, January 16, 1975, pp. 1, 4.

<sup>91</sup>*La Stampa*, March 23, 1975, p. 9.

<sup>92</sup>*Ibid.*

the ideological economic and military ties between Havana and Moscow have now become institutionalized enough to be quite durable. The Cuban leadership also continues to see itself as the only existing link between Latin America and the socialist camp, and thus as an indispensable spokesman and mutual broker for the two regions. Nevertheless, given the changing global context, it seems likely that Cuba will seek greater latitude outside the Soviet system through relations with the advanced capitalist countries, the Third World, and especially Latin America. This is reflected in the current political emphasis on the nation's image as a Latin American/Third World country, more than as a Soviet bloc member. And it is reflected in the intention to seek advanced technology and economic integration outside the socialist bloc.

#### POSTURES TOWARD THE UNITED STATES AND "IMPERIALISM"

The Cuban leaders are developing two simultaneous strategies for dealing with the United States and other capitalist countries. Using a bilateral approach with individual countries, the Cubans are vitally interested in negotiating deals for advanced technology and trade that are not available through the socialist system. By means of a multilateral approach, they are also advocating selective nonviolent "confrontation with imperialism" through Third World alliance and unity, in order to change the international terms of trade and development financing. Both postures seem to be based on new beliefs that Third World progress requires the preservation of the advanced capitalist system for the time being, and that imperialistic U.S. policies can be checked and even reversed.

#### Negotiations for "Vanguard Technology" and Trade

President Dorticós has made it clear that the future course of the Revolution will depend greatly on (1) the importation of "vanguard technology," and (2) "the imperative need for training a scientific and technological intelligentsia." "Cuba's aspirations are not so niggardly as to be satisfied with halfway development," he said, through inferior or intermediate technologies, whose importation would only increase the gap between the advanced and the underdeveloped countries. According



to Dorticós, therefore, Cuba must obtain vanguard technology in the advanced countries; "the choice for us is clear":

This is the only way for our economic development to advance along the path of high productivity. . . . It is a matter of principle that has already been advanced as cardinal and fundamental with respect to the integration of the community of socialist countries--the equalization of the levels of development.<sup>93</sup>

In turn, if Cuba continues to generate high foreign exchange earnings through its sugar sales on the world market, it may be in a position to obtain Western credits for the capital goods and technology required to accelerate the island's economic development.

The United States is a logical source because of its proximity and range of sophisticated equipment. Yet, potential trade ties are likely to be selective and nowhere near the magnitude of the pre-1959 period. The Cubans appear most interested in equipment for agriculture, food-processing, construction, communications, computer facilities, and automotive and railroad transportation. But restrictive U.S. legislation, most of it subject to Presidential determination, stands in the way of business deals with U.S. corporations.

Rodríguez gave an interview in June that may portend a major shift on the delicate issue of compensation for nationalized U.S. properties. In talking to Abraham Lowenthal (Council on Foreign Relations) and Samuel Huntington (Harvard University), he indicated that Cuba might agree to make a lump-sum payment to the U.S. Government, which in turn would distribute the compensation among individual claimants, an arrangement similar to that worked out earlier between the United States and Peru. Presumably, such an arrangement would be contingent upon the price of sugar Cuba might obtain in the United States as well as guaranteed access to the U.S. market and export products.<sup>94</sup> Hence, Havana

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<sup>93</sup>*Granma* (daily), September 14, 1974, pp. 2-3. Also, see Fidel's major exhortation for technical training in *Granma*, September 22, 1974, pp. 2-3.

<sup>94</sup>See Abraham Lowenthal, "Cuba: Time for a Change," *Foreign Policy*, Fall 1975, pp. 65-86. In addition, Fidel has recently argued (*Izvestia*,

appears to be maneuvering cautiously toward a renewal of selective ties with the United States.

The United States is not the only source for Western trade and technology, however. In point of fact, the Cuban regime is actively scouting for alternative trade deals in Western Europe, Canada, and Japan. In December 1974, Spain agreed to extend credits worth \$900 million for the purchase of Spanish ships and whole plants. In January 1975, Rodríguez visited Paris to make strong overtures to the French government for a major expansion of trade relations, and suggested creating an intergovernmental commission similar to the one already established between the Soviet Union and Cuba. The visit marked a friendly turning point in Cuban-French relations, which had soured after Castro's endorsement of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Marking the change, Rodríguez declared auspiciously:

We are building great hopes on our relations with France in the period 1976-1980. Our initial economic investment plans for that period amount to \$12-15 billion, that is, \$2.5-3 billion annually.<sup>95</sup>

France extended credits worth \$350 million for the purchases of machinery, transport equipment, and whole plants for fertilizer cellulose. The following March, Canada extended credits valued at \$155 million. In May, Rodríguez signed an Anglo-Cuban cooperation agreement worth

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March 6, 1975, p. 1) that the lifting of the U.S. embargo would primarily benefit the United States from a financial as well as moral perspective. Moreover, he has admitted (in an interview with Mexican newsmen, January 4, 1975) that the blockade has hurt Cuba economically, even though he appeared to adopt a tough bargaining stance at that time:

Possibly they [U.S. leaders] believe that Cuba will embark on political concessions for the sake of a lifting of the blockade. But we do not intend to make political concessions. Naturally, we are interested in the blockade being lifted because of the economic plane. It is causing us harm....

<sup>95</sup>*Le Monde*, January 16, 1975, p. 1.

\$580 million in British credits.<sup>96</sup> While in London, he also negotiated with British Leyland for the possible construction of a truck and assembly plant in Cuba.<sup>97</sup> A month later, the president of the Spanish automobile company, ENASA, was in Havana to bid on the installation of an assembly plant which ultimately is to have an annual production capacity of 6000 vehicles and 9000 engines.<sup>98</sup>

In dealing with capitalist enterprises, the Cubans are striving to modify traditional methods of obtaining capital and international financing. They are opposed to traditional forms of direct, long-term foreign investment which remain under exclusive foreign control. Yet they are amenable to transfers of technology "by means of contractual forms, such as those offered by the socialist countries and even some developed capitalist countries," that do not require the direct investment of capital.<sup>99</sup>

Beyond bilateral deals, the Cubans want to engage in multilateral negotiations with other Third World nations that will lead to radical changes in the international terms of trade for raw materials, and to new forms of development financing or, in their words, "contributions to development." For dealing with such multilateral issues, however, Cuban plans to negotiate for the acquisition of advanced technology merge with their intentions to engage in "confrontations with imperialism."

#### Selective "Confrontations With Imperialism"

On the one hand, Cuban leaders want to avert a worsening of the energy crisis that might destroy the capitalist system and preclude the acquisition of advanced technologies. On the other hand, they want to

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<sup>96</sup>Data taken from Central Intelligence Agency, Intelligence Handbook, *Cuba: Foreign Trade*, A(ER) 75-69, July 1975, Table 12, p. 16.

<sup>97</sup>See the report in *The Financial Times*, May 21, 1975, p. 1.

<sup>98</sup>The visit by Jorge Vals of ENASA was reported by the Spanish media on June 12, 1975. ENASA is competing against Japanese, French, Italian, and other foreign firms. The contract is expected to be awarded in late 1975.

<sup>99</sup>Speech by Joel Domenech, Deputy Prime Minister for Basic Industries, *Granma* (daily), March 17, 1975, p. 6.

take advantage of the energy crisis in order to push imperialism backwards. In Fidel's words, "Neither the petroleum countries nor the rest of the underdeveloped nations can permit themselves the luxury of losing this historic opportunity. The time has come for all the countries of the Third World to join forces and confront the imperialist challenge."<sup>100</sup>

While growing Soviet might and the energy crisis have served to weaken the forces of imperialism, their aggressive and reactionary essence remains dangerously unchanged in the Cuban view. In particular, the Cuban leaders accuse the U.S. Government of following a strategy of divisiveness in order to challenge the Third World and its defense of raw materials. According to Fidel Castro,

The strategy of the United States is very clear: to band together the developed capitalist countries under its direction, to cause division among Third World nations, and to isolate the oil-producing countries in order to impose conditions. To this end it threatens not only with reprisals of food supplies, but also with war.<sup>101</sup>

There is special concern that the United States will split the underdeveloped countries into two camps, one of oil-exporters and the other of oil-importers, and set them against each other--thereby isolating the oil-producers from the Third World and weakening the Movement of Nonaligned Countries.

Though the Cuban regime does not feel directly threatened, it warns that neither the Vietnam outcome nor the international energy crisis has diminished U.S. military capabilities and the willingness to exercise them. President Ford's statements about possible contingencies for military intervention in the oil-producing lands of the Middle East were treated not as attempts to intimidate by rhetoric, but rather as warnings of deliberate intent. Thus Fidel counseled that, "The present world balance of power is far from favorable to imperialism's warmongering ventures, but we must not underestimate the extremes to which

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<sup>100</sup> *Granma*, October 6, 1974, p. 3.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

desperation can lead."<sup>102</sup> However, Fidel believes that growing Soviet might (though not Soviet-U.S. détente) provides a major restraint on U.S. policy options toward the Third World, and effectively inhibits U.S. military interventions.<sup>103</sup>

The strategy of confrontation through unity represents a reply to the U.S. strategy of divisiveness within détente. By confrontation with imperialism, the Cubans seem to mean peaceful but forceful pressure exerted through coalitions and within regional and international organizations. Indeed, they sometimes use "facing up to imperialism" rather than "confronting imperialism" as the English translation of the Spanish phrase. While the language of confrontation seems to emphasize the negative over the cooperative elements in relations, the Cubans do not advocate violent or uncompromising opposition to U.S. policies. Instead, the once renegade Cuban regime is committing itself to traditional types of alliance politics and coalition-building within the Third World for the purpose of effective negotiations with the developed capitalist countries. This represents a striking moderation of Havana's earlier defiant behavior.

Confrontation with imperialism is clearly a Third World strategy. The ideal confrontation would appear to consist of the entire Third World, or at least a unified Latin America, mounting a diplomatic offensive against the United States in order to wrest maximum concessions from the latter. The Cubans thus have not called for the Soviet Union to confront the United States as part of the strategy. Instead, the strategy of confrontation seems to represent a way for Cuba, Latin America, and the Third World to maximize their leverage within the framework of détente and coexistence, even to take advantage of growing

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<sup>102</sup>*Granma*, March 30, 1975, p. 4.

<sup>103</sup>"If today the imperialists, in the middle of their energy and raw material crisis, do not leap with knife in mouth to divide up anew the world's natural resources; if they do not leap with knife in mouth to punish any nationalization; if they do not leap to physically seize these resources, it is simply because the Soviet Union and the socialist camp exist (translation from Spanish original), *Granma*, May 18, 1975, p. 3. This theme was first voiced by Cuba at the Conference of Non-aligned Countries at Algiers in 1973 and then reiterated by Fidel during Brezhnev's visit to Cuba. See *Granma*, February 10, 1974, p. 3.

Soviet might and the presumably peaceful Soviet-U.S. balance. In effect, the changed international and strategic environment, in the Cuban view, has facilitated the politics of nonviolent confrontation.

The Cubans first formulated this strategy in 1974 after feeling the impact of the energy crisis. Since then, the strategy has focused on changing the policies of the United States and other capitalist countries toward raw material pricing, terms of trade, and development financing. In particular, the Cubans aim to establish producer or producer-consumer associations for products other than petroleum, to enlarge petroleum negotiations to cover all raw materials, and to eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers to the marketing of Third World products in the developed countries.

To such ends, the contemporary ideas of First World responsibility and retribution to the Third World have been incorporated in the strategy. According to one leader, "the developed countries must provide the necessary governmental financial support to the development of the Third World, a support that means nothing more than a just retribution... for colonial exactions."<sup>104</sup> Rodríguez has moved beyond generality to claim that the United States has a special developmental responsibility toward Latin America and must "pay up."

The developed countries which have possessed colonies or neo-colonies have the primary obligation because their opulence is to a large extent the result of the plunder of the natural resources of those countries that have been devastated and whose people are now hungry. In Latin America, the largest share of the debt must be assigned to the United States of America, which, sooner or later, must pay up.<sup>105</sup>

The Cubans seem convinced that the United States could be compelled to "pay up" if other countries rallied behind their strategic proposals.

The appeal for strength through unity is presently directed at the OPEC countries, because their leadership position and vast resources

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<sup>104</sup> Joel Domenech in *Granma* (daily), March 17, 1975, p. 6.

<sup>105</sup> *Granma*, November 24, 1974, p. 9. Rodríguez even lamented in passing that AID and OECD development assistance had diminished in the wake of the energy crisis.

could alter the commercial balance in favor of the Third World. According to Fidel,

If the petroleum countries stand united and firm, if they do not allow themselves to be intimidated by the threats of the United States, and if they seek the alliance of the remainder of the underdeveloped world, the industrialized capitalist countries will have to accept as inevitable the disappearance of the shameful and unjust terms of trade that they have imposed on our peoples.<sup>106</sup>

For this to succeed, the financial surpluses obtained by OPEC must be shared with other Third World countries through a "strategy of aid for development" in order to compensate them for the rising costs of imports from the developed countries. Addressing himself to the oil-producing countries, Rodríguez has thus insisted that "it is not enough to have only a strategy for rising prices" because many underdeveloped countries lack oil or other basic raw materials for similarly increasing their revenues.<sup>107</sup> In effect, then, Cuba's confrontation through unity means that OPEC also has an obligation to "pay up."

While their vigorous confrontation rhetoric may sound uncompromising, the Cubans become quite pragmatic in actual practice when their key interests require direct, technical negotiations on specific issues with allegedly pro-imperialist forces. Thus far, for example, the Cubans have not favored the formation of a Third World cartel for sugar producers, and would much prefer the renewal of an International Sugar Agreement that includes consumers as well as producers in order to guarantee export markets and prices. Moreover, the Castro regime has

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<sup>106</sup> *Granma*, October 6, 1974, p. 3.

<sup>107</sup> Worried that investments in the capitalist countries may make oil the hostage of imperialism rather than the means of liberation from it, Fidel has warned OPEC countries that "...any type of playing around with imperialism by any Arab country is dangerous, because political opportunism cannot replace frank, open, and revolutionary diplomacy--and sometimes it leads to flagrant betrayal." Without unity, oil might lead to new forms for exploiting and impoverishing the Third World on behalf of the advanced capitalist countries. *Granma*, March 30, 1975, p. 3.

cooperated on a sugar-pricing policy with the Brazilian government, which it otherwise denounces as a fascist and sub-imperialist regime.<sup>108</sup>

#### POSTURES TOWARD LATIN AMERICA

Latin America has a special place in Cuban hopes for unity. Indeed, Cuban leaders are counting heavily on prospective economic integration and diplomatic solidarity with Caribbean and other Latin American countries that are progressive and nationalist in their view. At the same time, they are not discounting the possibility of future military aid in support of local allies who may become engaged in local conflicts with governments that the Cubans still regard as "fascist lackeys of imperialism."

#### Unity and Integration

Latin America has changed so much in recent years that the Cuban regime has abandoned its old emphasis on violent revolution in favor of direct government-to-government relations that emphasize the defense of national interests.<sup>109</sup> According to Rodríguez, the evolving Cuban posture prescribes that "the development of the revolutionary process must first entail the defense of national interests. The Cuban model is not the only one."<sup>110</sup> In particular, the Cubans are seeking to collaborate with progressive governments that are not socialist because, according to Rodríguez,

...this part of the continent is obviously going through a phase of intense nationalism, differentiation and increasingly open contradictions in relation to the United States. Cuba possesses a strategic vision of this evolution: it believes that it would be useful to unite various forces against American domination. Therefore, any

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<sup>108</sup> Jorge I. Domínguez, "Cuba, The United States, and Latin America After Détente," *SAIS Review*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 1975, pp. 22-23.

<sup>109</sup> On the general nature of changes in Latin America, see Luigi Einaudi (ed.), *Beyond Cuba: Latin America Takes Charge of Its Future*, Crane, Russak, New York, 1974.

<sup>110</sup> In *Nouvel Observateur*, January 26, 1975.



step contributing to the weakening of this domination is, we believe, positive. Whenever these attitudes are as clear as those adopted by Peru, Venezuela, and Mexico, they are fully supported by Cuba.<sup>111</sup>

Cuban leaders, especially Fidel, have made strong appeals for coalition with the oil-rich Venezuelan government, as well as with the current Peruvian, Panamanian, and Mexican governments. Equally significant, the Cubans are campaigning to expand their relations with the English-speaking Commonwealth countries of the Caribbean: Barbados, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica.

The Cuban leadership, therefore, recognizes that the country's future influence will depend largely upon their ability to form local alliances and to play leadership roles in regional forums. This may require that they assume more moderate and concessionary stances with their allies on issues that concern Latin America, even while upholding "anti-imperialist" postures toward the United States. Consequently, the Cubans no longer advocate Latin American emulation of the Cuban revolutionary experience as the model for intransigent defiance of the United States. Instead, they now claim that Cuba's earlier successes in overcoming "imperialist aggressions" can serve as instructive inspiration for various Latin American countries to join together in turning back U.S. domination through non-violent confrontation.

Beyond Latin American unity, the Cuban leaders also point to the utility of cooperation with the socialist bloc. In this regard, they perceive Cuba as the link between Latin America and the Soviet system. Nevertheless, this aspect has become subdued of late compared to Fidel's extravagant praise of Soviet ties at the Conference of Non-Aligned Nations in 1973. Indeed, there is now an inference that the more often the Latin American and Third World countries act in unison, the less they may require direct support from the socialist bloc in order to resist imperialism. As they progress with their advocacy of Third World alliance, therefore, the Cubans have tended to give less prominence to

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<sup>111</sup> *Le Monde*, January 16, 1975, p. 4.

socialist bloc support. In the future they might well stress the importance of the North-South struggle over East-West competition.

This new strategy is generally reflected in Cuban treatment of the recently proposed U.S. trade law. It originally contained exclusions against preferential tariffs for member nations of OPEC, as well as for nations that expropriated U.S. property without fair compensation, or that applied certain marketing or other restrictions on trade with the United States. In the Cuban view, the law constituted an overt form of economic aggression. Cuba called for Latin American unity in response, thus endeavoring to identify with Venezuela and other neighbor countries that were similarly opposing the proposed law. This call for unity was explicitly based on a strategy of anti-imperialism through peaceful confrontation and negotiation: it did not urge defiance and rejection of the United States, nor did it call for Latin American countries to re-orient their trade to the Soviet Union and socialist bloc. Instead, one leading press commentator even suggested that the U.S. Government might be educated into adopting respectful, non-imperialistic trade policies:

Martí also said, 'The contempt of the formidable neighbor, who is ignorant of her realities, is the greatest danger facing Latin America. And it is of vital importance, for the day of reckoning is near, that the neighbor be informed quickly, so that his contempt will cease. Out of ignorance, he might be led to lay hands on her. But, after he became informed, he would keep his hands off, out of sheer respect.' The time has come for the United States to show respect for Latin America.<sup>112</sup>

Such an assessment would have been impossible a few years ago.

While confrontation with imperialism is one purpose of the search for unity within Latin America, this is also valued for itself. Fidel and his fellow leaders want back into the mainstream of Latin American life. According to Rodríguez, even Cuba's participation in COMECON is

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<sup>112</sup> Joaquín Rivery, "The United States' Foreign Trade Law: A Challenge to Latin America," *Granma*, February 16, 1975, p. 12.

primarily "an act of political presence and identification with the member countries" pending economic integration with Latin America:

...it is only natural that we should already be considering a plan for Latin American integration which is not inconsistent with CEMA plans. This plan does not require any similarity between social and economic regimes.<sup>113</sup>

Short of such integration, Latin America presently offers Cuba important incentives for rejoining Latin America: access to new trade and technology; a formal acknowledgment of the permanency of the Cuban Revolution; and greater international leverage through regional or subregional coalitions. In addition, Cuban recognition of the island's vulnerability to international economic dislocations and to potential Soviet manipulation of petroleum or other needed trade factors for political purposes has become a spur to an active search for new partners in development. Thus far, the major breakthroughs for Cuba have been the credits extended by the Peronist government of Argentina in 1973 and the visit of President Echeverría of Mexico in August 1975, followed by a return visit to Mexico City by Raúl Castro in September.

Over the near term, therefore, the Cubans will work for improved economic as well as political ties with countries that are close, that share political affinities, and/or can offer Cuba essential raw materials, manufactured goods, and advanced technologies. There have been three leading candidates for such Cuban courtship: Peru, because of its assertive nationalist posture and growing political and even military contacts with Havana; Venezuela, because of its petroleum exports and emerging global role as a member of OPEC; and Mexico, because of its relatively higher level of industrial and technological development. In addition, Havana has recently wooed the governments of Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica, presumably in the expectation that these small new states in the Caribbean are more susceptible to Cuban influence than are the larger Latin American states. Indeed, the Cubans conceive of subregional economic agreements among Caribbean states,

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<sup>113</sup> *Le Monde*, January 16, 1975, pp. 1, 4.

along with the creation of a common political axis with Peru and other non-Caribbean states, as the first steps toward realizing their long-term goal of integration with Latin America.

The Cubans are presently pushing the traditional line that Latin America (Fidel actually differentiates between the Caribbean and Latin America) is distinct and should be separate from the United States. In his words,

The United States on one side and *the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean* on the other side form two worlds as different as Europe and Africa: they do not belong in the same community.... The United States already is a great community; *the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean* have before them the great historic task of forming their own as the indispensable condition for liberation, development, and survival....[emphasis added].<sup>114</sup>

To this end, the Cubans urge Latin Americans to form their own community organizations without U.S. participation, just as the Africans have formed theirs without the participation of European countries or South Africa or Rhodesia. The Cubans are especially interested in the creation of a new Latin American economic organization that would exclude the United States and, from their perspective, offer greater security guarantees than the Rio Pact or the "prostitute" OAS against "the domination, aggressions, and interventions of the United States."<sup>115</sup> At present they are placing their hopes on the formation of the Sistema Económico Latinoamericano (SELA), which is being organized mainly by Venezuela and Mexico. The Cubans have also joined the Multinational Caribbean Shipping Enterprise (NAMUCAR), which was founded in mid-June in conjunction with SELA and includes Colombia, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Venezuela.<sup>116</sup> Thus, as the Cubans emerge from their isolation, they are becoming outspoken proponents of measures

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<sup>114</sup> *Granma*, October 6, 1974, p. 3.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> The fact that the English-speaking Caribbean countries took the lead over the Spanish-speaking South American countries in establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba and condemning the blockade greatly impressed Fidel.

for integration. However, they seem to understand fully that what they see as a fundamental division between progressive, nationalist governments on one side, and fascist lackeys of imperialism on the other, may lead to conflict rather than cooperation among countries.

#### A Possibility of Conventional Military Aid to Allies

Cuban leaders have abandoned reliance on their old strategy of violent revolution in Latin America. According to Rodríguez, however, this does not necessarily mean that Havana will always withhold aid from future Latin American guerrilla and terrorist movements:

Cuba shall never renounce its right and its duty to cooperate with those who wish to change society whenever such change is impossible by democratic means and above all whenever such change is deterred by the intervention of the United States and the CIA.<sup>117</sup>

Nevertheless, by now it is old news that such aid has greatly diminished, and will likely be provided only in exceptional circumstances. The Cubans have recognized that revolutionary conditions do not prevail in Latin America. Furthermore, they have found that the threat or practice of aid to insurgent groups no longer serves as a general issue to gain some leverage with the Soviet Union and the United States.<sup>118</sup>

Given Cuba's changing contextual and strategic perspectives, conventional military assistance to allied governments in Latin America seems more likely as a future contingency than does further revolutionary assistance to insurgent groups. As an indication of this possibility, Fidel has hinted several times at the potential of the Cuban

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<sup>117</sup>*Nouvel Observateur*, January 26, 1975.

<sup>118</sup>In this regard, the Cubans have criticized rather than welcomed the appearance of new anarchist and terrorist groups in the United States and West European countries. According to Cuban analysis, such groups are anti-Communist and anti-Soviet contaminants; they foster ideological diversionism; and in the end their activities only serve to benefit the forces of imperialism. In actual practice, however, Havana has not been deterred from supporting organizations that have terrorist aims (such as the Palestine Liberation Organization) when it serves Cuba's political objectives. For possible Cuban support to Puerto Rican independence groups, see p. 38.

military for providing assistance abroad. Most recently, during military exercises attended by delegations from Peru and the Palestine Liberation Organization, he declared:

And we are at the service not only of our national cause, but also of the cause of our sister peoples of Latin America in their struggle against imperialism, and we are on the side of the peoples who face up to imperialism in all parts of the world.

Our country will need, therefore, over an indefinite period of time, greater and greater defense capacity, and that capacity will depend on the training of our people. In short, it will depend on the number of cadres in our Revolutionary Armed Forces and the number of reserve forces perfectly prepared for combat.<sup>119</sup>

In recent years conventional Cuban units have indeed joined Soviet-supported operations abroad. Cuban military officers have reportedly provided pilot training and flown MIGs in South Yemen (Aden), trained military and paramilitary ground units in Guinea, and trained assault troops in Somalia. The Cuban military has had a tank brigade operating with the Syrian army and has helped to train pilots there. Supporting military assistance was also reportedly provided to North Vietnam.<sup>120</sup>

Within Latin America, however, professional military-to-military relations are a very recent development for Cuba. In 1959, to be sure, Castro's new government did sponsor several guerrilla forays into the Caribbean and Central American region; some Cuban officers also participated in local insurgency operations in the Western hemisphere throughout the 1960s. Most of these, however, related to the MININT instead of the MINFAR where military doctrine stressed conventional national defense missions. Consequently, the FAR's standards of professionalism surely served to inculcate resistance to guerrilla insurgency as an essentially unprofessional activity for a career military officer. At the same time, the FAR's high level of professionalism

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<sup>119</sup> *Granma*, December 1, 1974, p. 7.

<sup>120</sup> See Brian Crozier, "The Soviet Presence in Somalia," *Conflict Studies*, No. 54, February 1975, p. 9; "Cuba: La Diplomacia Clandestina," *Visión*, November 16-30, 1974, pp. 36-39; and "The Cubans in South Yemen," *Foreign Report*, June 26, 1974, pp. 6-7.

enhanced its reputation among other Latin American military establishments, especially after Cuba began to be reaccepted into the Latin American community. In the last few years, Cuban officers have thus succeeded in establishing friendly professional contacts with their counterparts in various countries, including Peru, Panama, and Mexico.<sup>121</sup> The Cubans have worked especially to establish close relations with the Peruvian military, which has acquired some tanks and helicopters from the Soviet Union.<sup>122</sup>

The more Cuba strengthens relations with preferred governments in Latin America, the more Cuban leaders are likely to make offers of military relations and assistance. Such offers would not be subversive: state-to-state military assistance fits fully within accepted norms of international behavior. If some conventional conflict should eventually erupt in South America or elsewhere, and if the Cubans should believe that détente would assure their island security from U.S. intervention, then the Cuban government might well render conventional military assistance (including the provision of troops, equipment, advisors, and training) to certain nations in Latin America, as they have already done in Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. They very offer of such aid might gain the Cuban government some political leverage for treating other issues with wary foreign governments, much as the policy to aid revolution provided some leverage over the Soviet Union in an earlier period.

#### THE STRATEGY MIX

To recapitulate, Cuba's future policy objectives will seek to generate new international leverage through expanded ties with the Third

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<sup>121</sup>For example, in December 1973, military delegations from Peru, Panama, Mexico, Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana attended Cuban celebrations for the fifteenth anniversary of the Revolution, upon which occasion Fidel declared that "the experiences of our Armed Forces are at the service of the progressive governments and peoples of this continent." *Verde Olivo*, January 8, 1974, p. 6.

<sup>122</sup>On changing security perspectives in the region, see David Ronfeldt, "Future U.S. Security Assistance in the Latin American Context," in Commission on United States-Latin American Relations, *The Americas in a Changing World*, Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Co., New York, 1975, pp. 156-172.

World, to secure advanced Western technology, and to minimize aspects of Cuba's client relationship with the Soviet Union. As one of its sets of strategies, therefore, Havana will dutifully participate in the Soviet-sanctioned détente with the United States, but it will also seek to capitalize on détente as a way of reducing the island's dependence on the USSR. Hence, the Cubans will move cautiously toward normalizing some commercial and diplomatic ties with the United States in order to obtain needed technology and agro-industrial products, while limiting such ties in order to prevent North American adulteration of Cuba's new socialist society. At the same time, Cuba will seek to maintain its distance from the "Colossus of the North," and to obtain leverage over the latter, through so-called Third World/Latin American "confrontations with imperialism." In this regard, Havana will campaign for unity among progressive, nationalist regimes in Latin America, with special concentration on the governments of the Caribbean region. Possibly, too, Cuba's new Latin American ties will include the extension of conventional military assistance to fraternal governments in the event of a regional conflict.

These strategic elements, however, may not always combine to produce a coherently integrated set of foreign policies. Some elements are mutually supportive: thus, Latin American unity as proposed by the Cubans would be essential to successful confrontations with imperialism. Indeed, success at unity and alliance appears to be the central requirement for supporting various elements of Cuba's evolving foreign policy. Some elements may also work at cross-purposes: repeated insistence on harsh confrontation tactics against the United States could jeopardize Havana's endeavors to ally Cuba with Latin American governments--governments that may share interests in regional unity, but may generally prefer to adopt more positive attitudes toward the United States. Cuban policy postures might attempt to shift the terms of the inter-American dialogue to the Left, but extremist postures could damage Cuban credibility and lead to its marginalization in hemisphere affairs. Such potential inconsistencies, tradeoffs, and controversies suggest that Cuban policy may often appear ambivalent, as Cuban leaders endeavor to balance and qualify their mixed objectives and strategies.



Internal elite divisions and differences in organizational missions may further complicate the determination of Cuba's foreign policy strategies, and the relative weight to be assigned to any particular policy. Different elite sectors and agencies (the *fidelistas*, *raúlistas*, civilian technocrats, MINFAR, MININT, etc.) will surely have varying policy preferences and priorities. For example, the increasingly influential technocratic and managerial elites will have a strong interest in promoting the acquisition of advanced technology from the United States and other capitalist countries. Thus, they presumably would object to DGI support of radical and terrorist groups in countries with which Cuba is developing close economic relations.<sup>123</sup> Presumably, they would also argue against possible offers of military assistance to a Latin American ally if they thought it would interfere with Cuba's efforts to secure U.S. technology. For their part, military officers would likely press for the provision of some military assistance, as a legitimate extension of the professional mission of the MINFAR and the Cuban armed forces.

Similarly, Raúl and his followers in the MINFAR and MININT, along with still others in the new Party apparatus, probably would strenuously oppose the development of close contacts with the United States or other Western countries that might contaminate Cuba's revolutionary society. Indeed, the Castro regime has been carrying out a campaign against "ideological diversionism" since mid-1972 when Raúl, in a major address to the MININT, warned against the ideological "softening" of the

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<sup>123</sup> A large contingent of Cuban Embassy officials in Tokyo once had extensive ties with leftist students and intellectuals; these ties have greatly diminished over the last three years as Cuban-Japanese economic relations have expanded.

Cuba's foreign activities do not always appear so well synchronized, however. Only six months after Rodríguez obtained \$350 million in credits from the French government, the so-called "Carlos affair" in June 1975 led to the expulsion of three Cuban diplomats from the Paris embassy. They were alleged to be DGI agents with ties to a suspected terrorist who gunned down three French security agents that were investigating a Palestinian terrorist ring. See the *Los Angeles Times*, September 1, 1975.

revolution resulting from increased contacts with foreign visitors in Cuba.<sup>124</sup> The evolving expansion and diversification of Cuba's foreign policy roles may thus have noticeable bearing on internal elite and organizational divisions within the Cuban regime, while such divisions may well impede the synchronization of Havana's foreign policies and activities.

#### CUBA'S FUTURE IMPORTANCE

In addition to the difficulty of developing inherently conflicting elements of strategy, Cuban leaders will soon face another problem: the likely decline of Cuba's importance as an actor and issue. If a country is not considered very important abroad, its policies and strategies may not have much impact, regardless of the choices its leaders make. Cuban elite perspectives appear to include a potentially critical misjudgment: that in the evolving context, Cuba has, and will continue to have, high status and significant influence in the Latin American region.

During the 1960s Cuban leaders regarded their country as an extremely important, even pivotal, force in world politics. And indeed, events showed they were partly correct. Those same leaders still attribute special roles to their country, believing it can lead the way to repelling U.S. influence and installing a new Latin American system. Fidel in particular maintains that "...the country has gained excellent momentum. Cuba's prestige in Latin America is growing. It is growing more and more. Cuba's example is exerting considerable influence on the whole of Latin America."<sup>125</sup> Elite persistence in such beliefs is not surprising, but seems to neglect the probable impact of great changes in Cuba's international and regional contexts.

The Cuban Revolution originated at a time of intense bipolarity, when its leaders encountered little choice other than total association with one superpower or the other. However, many Third World governments now find that trends toward multipolarity have increased incentives for

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<sup>124</sup>See Raúl's address, "El diversionismo ideológico: arma sutil que esgrimen los enemigos contra la Revolución," in *OCLAE* (November-December 1972), pp. 39-52.

<sup>125</sup>*Izvestia*, March 6, 1975, p. 3.

cooperative relations with both the United States and the Soviet Union on some if not many issues, and reduced incentives for either very close cooperation with or strong rejection of either the United States or the Soviet Union.<sup>126</sup> The Cuban leaders, who are clearly constrained by distinctive geographical and ideological perspectives, have been slower than many others to take advantage of these conditions. They have only recently taken steps that show an awareness of the rising costs of their very close ties with the Soviet Union, and of the corresponding needs to diversify relations.

The more Cuba normalizes its relations within the hemisphere, the more its salience and influence are likely to attenuate.<sup>127</sup> The small island nation will likely return to a middle-ranking position in the inter-American community, whose activities are of greater significance to the neighboring United States and the Caribbean than to the traditionally high-ranking, large countries of South America. Once the inter-American issues are settled, their leaders will likely care less about Cuba as an issue or actor. Even if Cuba is successful at developing a fairly prosperous national economy, this will not necessarily convert into high political status, as suggested by the fact that pre-revolutionary Cuba had one of the better developed economies of the region. Thus, the Cuban regime might see its bargaining position diminish in the future even while the island's economic and political order improve; for it has little to offer in exchange for close relations with many Latin American countries, or for leadership roles in the hemisphere. In this respect, there is no significant indication that national leaders elsewhere will be guided by the Cuban model. In fact, national leaders elsewhere may reasonably claim to have achieved greater national independence than has Cuba, which remains economically and militarily the dependent client of one superpower.

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<sup>126</sup> For an expansion of this point, see Einaudi (ed.), op. cit., ch. 13.

<sup>127</sup> From a different perspective, Jorge Domínguez likewise suggests that Cuba will matter less to the United States as the latter evolves from being a "hegemonial power" to becoming one among various "great powers." See Domínguez, op. cit., p. 22.

Recent Cuban emphasis on Puerto Rican independence may represent a new attempt to gain some leverage over the U.S. Government in subsequent negotiations concerning U.S.-Cuban relations. Havana's attention to Puerto Rico may also be part of a new Caribbean area strategy, whereby Cuba has assiduously courted the new states of the Caribbean basin (Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica) in a apparent effort to establish greater influence in this sub-region. Whether or not the Cuban regime succeeds in this regard will depend not only on Havana's diplomacy, but also on how the other Caribbean governments come to perceive Cuban intentions and their own interests.



